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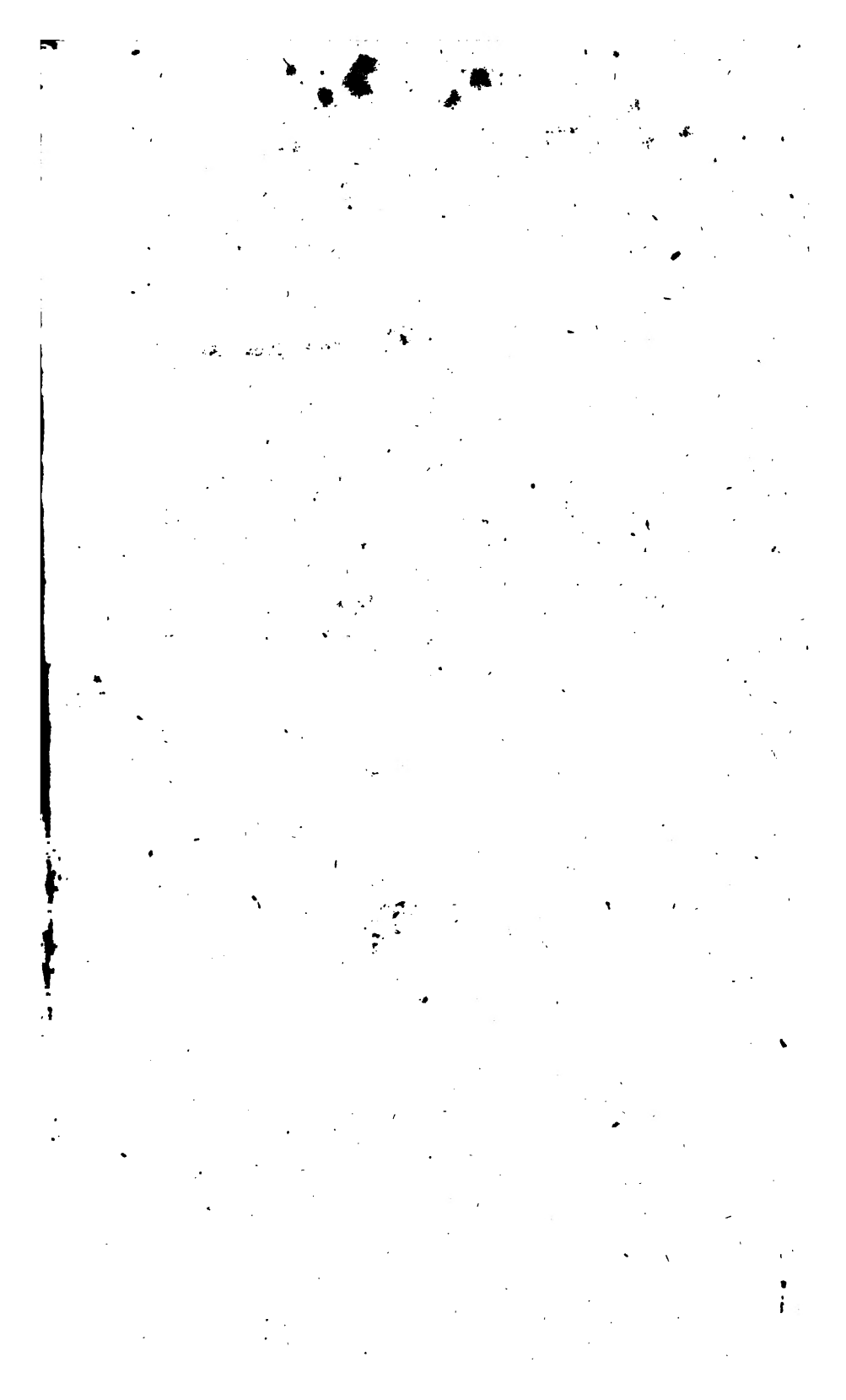
TO THE UNIVERSITY

BY

ROBERT FINCH, M.A.,

OF BALLIOL COLLEGE.

2231 E. 211









AN
Universal History,

FROM THE
Earliest Accounts to the Present Time.

Compiled from
ORIGINAL AUTHORS.

Illustrated with
CHARTS, MAPS, NOTES, &c.

AND
A GENERAL INDEX to the Whole.

*Ἱστορίας ἀρχαίας ἐξέρχεσθαι μὴ καταλείβειν· ἐν αὐταῖς γὰρ ὑψηλοὺς ἀνέπικας
ἀπὸ τοῦ ἱεροῦ συνῆξαν ἐγκόπως.* Basil. Imp. ad Leon. fil.

V O L. XIII.



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C O N T E N T S

OF THE

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A N

Universal History,

FROM THE

Earliest Accounts to the Present Time.

C H A P. LII. *continued.*

*The History of Rome, from the Settlement of the
Roman Empire to the Death of Nero, the last
of the Family of the Cæsars.*

IN the course of this year, Cæsonius Pætus and Petronius Turpilianus being consuls, the Romans suffered a dreadful slaughter in Britain. Didius had been succeeded in that province by Veranius, a general of great reputation, who meditated mighty projects, which were all defeated by his death. His place was filled by Suetonius Paulinus, who had acquired great fame as a military commander, in being the first Roman who had passed Mount Atlas in Africa, and penetrated to the banks of the Niger. His first exploit in Britain was the conquest of Mona, or Anglesey, an island separated from the country of Wales by a narrow channel, over which he transported his infantry in flat-bottomed boats, while his cavalry passed by swimming. Mona was the chief retreat of the Druids, who had their colleges and their sacred groves, and here fixed the metropolitan seat of their religion. Suetonius found it would be impossible to subdue the Britons effectually, while this order of men subsisted, to influence their conduct, and inspire them with an enthusiastic love of liberty and independence. He therefore resolved to destroy the seminary at once, and

Yr. of Fl.

2410.

A. D. 62.

U. C. 810.

*The state of
affairs in
Britain.*

*General
revolt of
the Britons.*

extirpate the religion of the Druids root and branch. The islanders were drawn up in order of battle on the shore to oppose him; and he saw a number of women habited like Furies, with dishevelled hair, and torches in their hands, furrounded by Druids, who lifted up their hands to heaven, and poured forth the most terrible execrations. The Romans were so confounded at this spectacle, that they stood for some time motionless, and received the first assault of the Britons without using their arms in their defence: but they were soon roused by the exhortations of their general, reinforced with their own recollection, and springing forwards upon the enemy, routed them with great slaughter. Suetonius ordered the Druids to be burned in the fires they had kindled for sacrificing their prisoners: he caused their altars to be demolished, and their groves to be cut down, resolving that no memorial of their religion should remain. The remnant of the Druids that survived this disaster, retired to Ireland and the Hebrides, while Suetonius began to build forts for the preservation of the island which he had conquered. This work was soon interrupted by an unexpected incident. He was recalled to quell a general insurrection of the Britons, in which not only the subjects but also the allies of the Romans had joined the other nations that were not yet reduced. This revolt was undoubtedly ripened by a sense of the grievances under which the Britons groaned. In order to pay the cruel taxes with which they were burdened, they borrowed money of the Romans; and if they failed to satisfy those usurers with the utmost punctuality, their cattle and effects were seized, and themselves expelled from their habitations. Seneca is said to have lent them great sums at extravagant interest, and upon their failure in point of payment, to have proceeded to such extremities, as in a great measure contributed to this revolt: but the immediate cause of their taking up arms, may be referred to an outrage of another kind. Prasatagus, king of the Iceni, had by his will, bequeathed his estate as a joint inheritance between the emperor Nero and his own daughters, that, by sacrificing one part, he might secure the other to his family: but this precaution did not avail. On the death of the testator, Catus Decianus, procurator of the province, took possession of the whole: the widow Bonducia making remonstrances against this act of injustice, he ordered her to be scourged, and violated the chastity of her daughters; the kindred of Prasatagus were treated like slaves, his houses seized, his principalities wasted, and the nobility or chieftains expelled from their paternal estates. These barbarities, added to other motives of discontent,

tent, exaggerated by the dowager, who was a woman of a masculine spirit and commanding eloquence, and inflamed by the remaining Druids, produced a general rebellion. The Iceni were joined by the Trinobantes and the Brigantes; all the subjected states, and even the remote Caledonians, engaged in this confederacy; so that Bonducia soon found herself at the head of two hundred and thirty thousand fighting men. With this army, she surprised the Roman colony at Camulodunum, and put the inhabitants to the sword; burned the temple of Cláudius; destroyed Verulam, which was a Roman municipium, now St. Alban's; surrounded and cut in pieces the ninth legion, commanded by Petilius Cereulis; ravaged the whole country subject to the Romans, burning, crucifying, and impaling the wretched people, without distinction of age or sex: then the Britons returned to their respective habitations, loaded with booty and satiated with revenge. Suetonius was no sooner informed of this revolt, than he began his march from Anglesey to London, where he drew together the auxiliary cohorts from the neighbouring garrisons; and though Pœnius Posthumius, prefect of the second legion, refused to join him, these draughts, with the fourteenth legion and the vexillarii of the twentieth, composed a body of ten thousand men, with which he resolved to hazard an engagement, as Bonducia had reassembled her forces, in order to give him battle. Paulinus, well aware of the enemy's impetuosity, resolved to choose his ground, and wait for the attack. Accordingly he formed his troops in an advantageous situation, with a thick impenetrable wood in his rear, and a large open plain in front. The Britons, elated with the advantages they had lately gained, and confiding in their numbers, after having been harangued by Bonducia, proceeded to the attack with loud shouts and acclamations, and charged with great impetuosity. The Romans sustained their onset without flinching; and having expended all their javelins, advanced in form of a wedge against this enormous multitude, which soon fell into confusion. Notwithstanding all their efforts, they were obliged to yield to the discipline and valour of the Romans, who gained a complete victory, and killed eighty thousand of them in the battle and pursuit. Far from being dispirited by this defeat, they prepared for another engagement, when Bonducia dying suddenly, either of grief or poison, they were so disheartened by this event, that they immediately dispersed. As for Pœnius Posthumius, he fell upon his sword, either to avoid the punishment he had reason to expect for his disobedience, or because he could not survive the

Great victory gained by Suetonius.

the disgrace of having excluded himself from a share in such an illustrious action. Suetonius, in order to prevent the Britons from reassembling their forces, laid waste the country, and a dreadful famine ensued, by which great numbers perished. Nevertheless, the wretched islanders chose rather to starve upon their native hills, than eat the bread of slavery; and their reduction was retarded by a quarrel which broke out between Suetonius and the new procurator Julius Clafricanus, which last made such unfavourable reports of the general at Rome, that Nero sent over his freedman, Polycletus, to take cognizance of the affair. Suetonius was recalled, and Petronius Turpilianus appointed proprætor in his room. This officer, instead of imitating the example of his predecessor, whose severities had rendered him odious to the natives, treated them with such mildness and humanity, that their resentments subsided, and the revolted states returned to their obedience. His administration gave such satisfaction at Rome, that when he returned the senate decreed him triumphal honours: and his successor, Trebellius Maximus, pursuing the same plan of conduct, the Britons were gradually reconciled to the customs and manners of the Romans^a.

*Suetonius
succeeded
by Turpi-
lianus.*

*The govern-
nor of
Rome mur-
dered by
one of his
slaves.*

But to return to the transactions at Rome: several persons of great distinction were either degraded or banished, for forging a will (A). Not long after, the death of Pedanius Secundus, governor of Rome, murdered by a slave of his own, occasioned no small disturbances in the city. According to the ancient laws of Rome, all the slaves, who lived under the same roof, were to be involved in the like penalty with the criminal; but such was, on this occasion, the clamour of the populace, zealous to save so many inno-

^a Dio, lib. lxii. p. 706. Tacit. Annal. lib. xiv. Tacit. Agric. lib. xv.

(A) Among these was Antonius Primus, of whom we shall speak in the reign of Vespasian, and Asinius Marcellus, descended of an illustrious family, being the great-grandson of the celebrated Asinius Pollio, and himself without any other blemish in his conduct and manners, than that he believed poverty to be the greatest of evils. The illustrious memory of his ancestors, and the intreaties of the emperor, procured him an

exemption from the punishment due to his crime. With the others privy to these detestable practices, was condemned, and interdicted Italy, one Valerius Ponticus, a pleader or advocate, for endeavouring to save the criminals by the quibbles of the law; and it was decreed, that whoever should take a fee for such vile employment, should suffer the same punishment as one publicly condemned for calumny.

cent lives, that it proceeded even to sedition. The senate too was rent into parties, some rejecting with great warmth such excessive rigour, while others voted against any innovation. After a long and warm debate, it was carried, that without compassion for the number of slaves, for the age of some, for the sex of others, for the undoubted innocence of most, they should be all condemned to death, and executed. As they were no fewer than four hundred, the populace tumultuously assembled, to prevent the execution of so many innocent persons : but Nero reprimanded them by an edict, and, with lines of soldiers, secured the way, through which they were led to the place of execution. Cingonius Varro moved, that the freedmen also, who re-

All his slaves are executed.

sided under the same roof, should be for ever expelled Italy ; but Nero opposed that motion, urging, that since the rigour of the ancient custom had not been softened by mercy, it ought not to be heightened by cruelty ^b. In the following year P. Marius and L. Asinius were consuls. During the administration of these consuls, the prætor Antistius, having composed a poem replete with contumelious invectives against the prince, and read it to a numerous assembly at a banquet in the house of Ostorius Scapula, was arraigned upon the law of majesty by Cossutianus Capito ; a law which, after a long dispute, was upon this occasion revived. Ostorius declared before the senate, when he was called upon to give his evidence, that he knew nothing of the imputed crime ; but the contrary testimony of the other witnesses being credited, Julius Marullus, consul elect, voted, that the accused should be divested of his prætorship, and put to death. Thrasea Pætus, after high encomiums upon Nero, and many bitter invectives against Antistius, argued, that since, under such an excellent prince, the senate was, in its decisions, governed by no influence or compulsion, and halts and executioners were long since banished, the only punishment they could inflict, without bringing themselves under the imputation of cruelty, and the times under that of infamy, was to confiscate the estate of the criminal, and confine him to a solitary island. The generous freedom of Thrasea animated the other senators, who came readily into his opinion, except a small number of abandoned flatterers, among whom was the infamous sycophant Vitellius. The consuls, however, before they gave the last sanction to the decree, thought it advisable to acquaint the emperor with their resolution ; who, after having long struggled between shame and resentment,

Antistius writes a satire against Nero.

The generous freedom of Thrasea Pætus.

^b Tacit. Ann. lib. xiv. cap. 42-45.

at last answered, that since Antistius had, without any provocation, uttered so many virulent invectives against the prince, it was the duty of the senate to decree a punishment suitable to the crime. However, as he would certainly have opposed any rigorous sentence, so he would now by no means defeat their mercy : they might therefore determine as they thought best : and from him they had full liberty to discharge the criminal.

From this answer it plainly appeared, that the emperor was piqued ; but notwithstanding his displeasure, neither Thrasea nor the other senators abandoned the measures which they had approved. At the same time Fabricius Veiento was expelled Italy, for writing a satire against the senate, and making traffick of the prince's favour, by selling the great offices of the state. His writings being condemned to the flames, were, as Tacitus observes, universally sought and read, while it was difficult to find them, and dangerous to keep them ; but when every one was free to possess and peruse them, they sunk into contempt and oblivion^c.

*The death
of Burrhus.*

This year died, to the unspeakable grief of all good men, the celebrated Burrhus, one of the chief friends and supports of the public ; but whether by poison or disease is not certainly known : the latter was imagined, because a swelling in his throat gradually increased, till, by a total stoppage of respiration, he was suffocated. Suetonius^c and Dio Cassius^d tell us, that Nero, having promised him a remedy against his distemper, sent him a venomous drug. It was a common report, that Burrhus, when the prince came to visit him, turned his face another way, and, to his repeated enquiries about his health, returned no other answer than this ; " I am well." The loss of so great and worthy a man was long regretted in Rome, as well from the memory of his own virtues, as from the different character of his joint successors ; for Nero appointed two captains of the prætorian guards, Fenius Rufus and Sosonius Tigellinus. The former was a man of great integrity, but indolent and an utter enemy to all business ; the other, infamous for lewdness, cruelty, avarice, and all the most flagrant iniquities, but in high favour with Nero, and by him brought into power from a participation of all his secret debauches and revels.

*The character
of
Tigellinus.*

One of the champions of virtue being now removed, the many wicked and evil counsellors who abounded in the

^c Tacit. Annal. lib. xiv. cap. 48—50. lib. lx. p. 706.

^d Suet. cap. 35.

^e Dio,

emperor's court, attacked his friend Seneca, with many criminal imputations; namely, that he had already acquired wealth above the condition of a citizen, and was insatiably accumulating more; that such was the magnificence of his gardens, such the splendor of his villas, that, in these instances of grandeur, he excelled even the emperor; that he was labouring to attach to his own person the veneration of the Roman people; that he derided Nero's skill in managing horses, turned his voice into mockery whenever he sang, and to himself alone arrogated the praise and perfection of eloquence: they added, that Nero was no longer a child, and therefore ought now to begin to reign, to dismiss his pedagogue, and to be governed by more famous tutors, his glorious ancestors. Seneca was not ignorant of the efforts of his enemies; therefore, finding the emperor had withdrawn his usual affability, and shewed himself daily more and more reserved towards him, he begged an audience. Having obtained this favour, he besought the emperor to allow him to retire, and apply himself wholly to the cultivation of his mind, and to the study of philosophy; intreating him, at the same time, to accept of his immense wealth, his stately villas and gardens, and his ample possessions, which were too great rewards for the small service he had rendered him, and administered fresh fuel to the raging envy of his enemies.

Several charges brought against Seneca.

He begs leave to retire.

Nero replied, that he still stood in great need of the wise rules, wholesome counsels, and useful precepts, with which he had assisted his infancy and youth; and therefore could not, by any means, grant him his request. "As to your gardens, seats, and wealth (said he), there are many favourites, no way equal to you in worthy accomplishments, distinguished with larger possessions. I blush to quote freedmen, who are esteemed more wealthy than you; and am ashamed that one, who is dear to me above all others, does not yet surpass all others in fortune. If you forsake your prince, and to him surrender your wealth, the treasure returned will be ascribed, not to your moderation, but to my rapaciousness, and your retreat to the dread of my cruelty. But suppose this disinterestedness of your's, this contempt of riches, be generally applauded, yet surely it will reflect no honour upon a wise man to seek glory from a proceeding which must unavoidably bring infamy upon his friend." To these words he added kisses and embraces, swearing several times, in the most solemn manner, that he would rather perish a thousand times than suffer him to be injured.

Nero's deceitful speech to him.

Seneca returned him thanks for his kindness and generosity; but nevertheless altered his former conduct, received

*He avoids
the court.*

*Sylla put to
death.*

*Plautus
murdered.*

*Nero mar-
ries Pop-
pæa.*

few visits at home, avoided any train of attendance abroad, and appeared seldom in public, as if he were confined to his house by ill health or the study of philosophy. The retreat of Seneca doubled the authority of Tigellinus, who, diving artfully into the secret fears of the prince, and finding that he chiefly dreaded Plautus and Sylla, the one lately removed into the East, the other into Gaul, persuaded him to put them both to death, hoping to bear a still greater sway with the emperor, by thus seeming to consult his peace and security. Sylla was dispatched while he was at table, without any apprehension of danger, by assassins, who, in six days, arrived express at Marseilles, to which city he had been confined. When his head was presented to Nero, its untimely hoariness is said to have moved him to unbecoming jests and derision. The sentence awarded against Plautus was not so successfully concealed: Lucius Antistius, his father-in-law, receiving private notice of it, dispatched a freedman of his own, who, outbidding the fatal centurion, brought him from his master the following advice; that he should take care to shun a cowardly death; that he had yet leisure to escape, and could not fail to find compassion from all worthy and generous men; that, if he had once repulsed the sixty soldiers (for so many were sent to dispatch him), he might then, while the tidings were transmitting to Nero, prosecute many schemes, and lay the foundation of a war; at least, he had nothing more dreadful to suffer after a brave resistance than what he must suffer by a cowardly acquiescence. Plautus, not moved by these considerations, chose rather to die than to preserve his life by kindling a civil war; so that the assassins, finding him quite unprepared for any resistance, murdered him in the middle of the day before Pelago the eunuch, who was, by Nero, set over the centurion and his band. Afterwards, he wrote letters to the senate, in which he inveighed with great bitterness against Sylla and Plautus; but took no notice of their death. However, the senate, perfectly acquainted with what had happened, decreed processions, appointed thanks to be publicly returned to the gods, and degraded Sylla and Plautus from the dignity of senators. Nero perceiving, from the decree of the senate, that his most flagrant iniquities passed for commendable actions, divorced Octavia without delay, alleging that she was barren, and married Poppæa; who, to prevent his ever being reconciled to his former wife, suborned one of Octavia's domestics to accuse her of a criminal amour with a slave named Eucerus, a native of Alexandria, who was famous for playing upon the flute. The maids of Octavia were all examined upon the rack;

rack, and though some, overcome by the exquisite pain of the torture, confirmed the forgery, yet most of them maintained, and with great constancy vindicated, the unspotted character of their lady (B). However, she was first removed from the palace, and afterwards banished into Campania, where a guard of soldiers was placed over her.

As the populace openly complained of this cruel treatment, Nero, dreading the resentment of the provoked multitude, recalled her soon after, to the infinite satisfaction of the Roman people, who, in transports of joy, crowded to the temples with thanksgivings, overthrew the statues of Poppæa, crowned with flowers those of Octavia, and, carrying her images in triumph, placed them in the great forum, and in the several temples. Poppæa, fearing Nero might, to gratify the populace, recall Octavia to his bed, prevailed upon him, by a speech artfully framed to produce both terror and wrath, to resolve upon the ruin of the innocent Octavia. As the fiction of the unhappy princess's intrigue with Eucerus had been defeated by the testimony of her maids upon the rack, it was agreed to procure one, who should own himself guilty with her, and against whom might be also feigned a plausible charge of meditating a revolution in the state. Anicetus, who had murdered Agrippina, was judged a proper man for his vile purpose. To him therefore Nero addressed himself, and, partly by promises, partly by menaces, induced him to acknowledge, that he had maintained a criminal conversation with Octavia. He had no sooner made this confession, than Nero issued an edict, declaring that Octavia, in hopes of engaging the fleet in her conspiracy, had corrupted Anicetus the admiral; and, forgetting that he had, just before, accused her of barrenness, he added, that she had concealed her secret lusts, and always defeated her pregnancy by abortion; and that these crimes were by him fully detected. In consequence of this accusation, the unfortunate princess was banished to the island of Pandataria, and, after a few days, doomed to die. Those who were charged with the execution of this cruel and unjust sentence, having tied her down, opened all the veins of her body; but, as her blood was chilled through fear, and issued slowly, they hastened her death, by stifling her in the steam of a boiling bath. After her decease, her head was cut off by a centurion, and

The affection of the people to Octavia.

A false charge brought against her.

She is banished, and afterwards murdered.

(B) While Tigellinus was earnestly pressing Octavia's maids, upon the rack, to deliver themselves from their torments, by owning their lady's guilt, one of them, named Pythias, returned him this answer; "Castiora sunt muliebræ Octaviæ quam os tuum."

carried

Pallas dies.

carried to Rome, that Poppæa might have the satisfaction of seeing it, and diverting herself with so tragical a spectacle (C). This year died Doryphorus, Pallas, and Romanus, all three imperial freedmen of great power, and believed to have been poisoned by Nero's orders; Doryphorus, because he endeavoured to prevent the marriage with Poppæa; Pallas, because he lived too long, and prevented the prince from enjoying his immense wealth; and Romanus, because he brought a charge of treason against Seneca, which the accused retorted upon him ^f.

Poppæa is delivered of a daughter,

In the following year, when L. Virginus Rufus and C. Memmius Regulus were consuls, Poppæa was delivered of a daughter; an event which filled Nero with unspeakable joy: she was honoured with the name of Augusta; and upon Poppæa was conferred the same title. The senate had before made public vows for her happy delivery; and now many more were added, and the whole amply fulfilled: days for solemn processions were appointed; a temple was decreed to Fecundity; golden images of the Fortunes at Antium, where the child was born, were ordered to be made, and placed on the throne of Jupiter Capitolinus: but short-lived was the prince's joy; for within four months the infant died, a disaster which gave occasion to new strains of flattery. She was placed among the gods, and divine worship, with a priest, altars, and sacrifices, were voted to her. As the emperor had rejoiced, so he grieved, beyond all measure, for this misfortune ^g (D).

who dies soon after.

In

^f Tacit. Ann. lib. xlv. cap. 65. Dio, lib. lxii. p. 707. Suet. cap. 35. ^g Tacit. Ann. lib. xv. cap. 13. Suet. *ibid*.

(C) Tacitus observes, that nothing ever filled the hearts of the people with more affecting compassion, than the cruel sufferings, and untimely end, of this innocent princess, inhumanly massacred in the twenty-second year of her age, under the imputation of a crime more barbarous and cruel than death itself, without having ever tasted any share of happiness and delight. But the senate, at this time under the emperors, an assembly of slavish wretches, entirely devoted to corruption and servitude, for this execution, as for some notable deliverance,

pompously decreed gifts and oblations to the gods. Anicetus, as one convicted by his own confession, was banished into Sardinia, where he lived in great affluence, and died at length by the course of nature.

(D) To allay his griefs, he exhibited various shews; among the rest a combat of gladiators, in which four hundred senators, six hundred knights, and, what was a sight altogether new, many ladies of great distinction, entered the lists. In one of these shews, a knight of illustrious quality rode full speed down a steep descent upon an elephant:

In the next consulship of Caius Lecanius Bassus and M. Licinius Crassus Frugi, Nero, becoming every day more transported with a passion for singing and playing on the public stage, and not daring to begin at Rome, resolved to repair to Naples, to make his first essay there, and from thence pass over into Greece, and contend for the prize in music at the Olympic games. Accordingly, he departed from Rome, with his usual attendance and equipage, that is, with a thousand chariots, his horses and mules all shod with silver, his grooms and muleteers clad in the richest cloth of Canusium, and attended by a band of prætorian guards, and a body of African horse, most pompously attired. Soon after his arrival at Naples, he mounted the stage, and sung, for several days together, to an immense multitude, all the mob of Naples, and incredible numbers, from the neighbouring cities and colonies, flocking to such an extraordinary spectacle. In this exercise he passed his whole time at Naples, repairing to the theatre in the morning, and continuing there till night, allowing himself at intervals a small respite to take breath, and refresh himself; which he did in the presence of the multitude, telling them, that when he had washed his throat, he would entertain them with a finer air than any they had yet heard. Being much delighted with the praises which some Alexandrians, lately arrived at Naples, bestowed on his heavenly and august voice, he sent for more in great haste, and was ever after attended by some of them on the stage, richly attired; and each distinguished by a ring of great value on the left hand. As they were for the most part youths, he appointed them governors to take care of their education, and allowed them an annual pension of four hundred thousand sesterces ^a.

Nero sings upon the stage.

The emperor left Naples, with a design to pass into Greece, and display his abilities there. In his route to the Adriatic, he reposed some time at Beneventum, where, by

^a Suet. cap. 20. Tacit. Annal. lib. xv. cap. 35.

phant: another personated Icarus; but, in attempting to fly, fell down so near the emperor, that he was besprinkled with his blood. A comedy was also acted, composed by Afranius, and entitled Incendium, or *the Burning*, in which a house, richly furnished, was set on fire,

and permission granted to the actors to risle it. During these shews he did not, like other emperors, scatter money among the populace, but tickets for vast sums, for fine houses, gardens, and estates, which he faithfully consigned to those who produced the tickets.

Vatinius,

*Obliges
Torquatus
to destroy
himself.*

*Returns
to Rome,
with a de-
sign to go
to Egypt.*

*Why he
dropped his
design of
going into
Egypt.*

*His ban-
quets.*

Vatinius, was exhibited a pompous shew of gladiators (E). During the solemnity of these sports, Nero gave way to acts of tyranny and blood. He forced Torquatus Silanus, the great-grandson of Augustus, to die for living with greater splendour and magnificence than became a private person, and therefore was supposed to aspire to the sovereign power. Torquatus opened the veins of both his arms, and bled to death.

Nero, for reasons that were not known, deferred his voyage to Greece, and returned to Rome, with a design to shew himself to the provinces of the East, especially to Egypt; which project he declared by a public edict, and then went to offer his oblations for the success of that journey to the several deities in the city: but as he entered the temple of Vesta he was seized with a sudden tremor, which shook him in every joint, and is ascribed by some writers to the awful aspect of the goddess; by others, to the recollection of his enormous crimes, with which he was so perpetually haunted, that he was never a moment free from pangs and agonies. He dropped his project, pretending that he could not prevail upon himself to deprive the Roman citizens for so long a time of the joyful sight of their prince. This declaration was pleasing to the populace, from their inclination to diversions, which, by his residence at Rome, they enjoyed, and from the apprehension of scarcity of provisions in his absence¹.

Nero revelled frequently in the public places, and great squares, using the whole city as his own house. These banquets were expensive and magnificent almost beyond belief, and no less infamous for the monstrous scenes of lewdness practised at them; for he was generally attended at such entertainments by the most debauched and abandoned women of the whole city. Tacitus describes the feast pre-

¹ Tacit. Annal. lib. xv. cap. 37. Dio, lib. lxxii. p. 707, 708.

(E) Vatinius was one of the most baneful monsters that haunted the court, originally bred in a cobbler's stall, hideous and distorted in his person; at first taken to court as a buffoon, and afterwards, by calumny, by lying accusations against every worthy man, and a sarcastical turn, raised to such a height, that in wealth and favour, and in power to do mischief, he surpassed all the other ministers of iniquity in Nero's court (1).

(1) Tacit. Annal. lib. xv. cap. 35.

pared for him this year by Tigellinus, as a pattern of all the rest (E).

In the course of this year, the eleventh of Nero's reign, and sixty-fourth of the Christian æra, happened the famous burning of Rome; but whether by chance, or the contrivance of the prince, is not determined. The fire began among certain shops, in which were kept such goods as were proper to feed it, and spread every way with such amazing rapidity, that its havock was felt in distant streets, before any measures to stop it could be taken. Besides an infinite number of common houses, all the noble monuments of antiquity, all the stately palaces, temples, porticoes with goods, riches, furniture, and merchandize, to an immense value, were devoured by the flames, which raged first in the low regions of the city, and then mounted to the higher with such terrible violence and impetuosity as to frustrate all endeavours of relief. The shrieks of the women, the various efforts of some endeavouring to save the young and tender, of others attempting to assist the aged and infirm, and the hurry of such as strove only to provide

Yr. of Fl.
2413.
A. D. 64.
U. C. 813.

The burning of Rome.

The miserable condition of the inhabitants.

(E) In the lake of Agrippa, he built a large vessel, which contained the banquet, and was towed by other vessels, embellished with rich ornaments of gold and ivory: these were rowed by professed catamites, ranged according to their different age and skill in their abominable profession. The banquet consisted of great variety of wild fowl and wild beasts from remote countries, and fish from the ocean. On the banks of the lake, on one side, stood brothels filled with ladies of great rank, and on the other common harlots, quite naked. When night came, the neighbouring groves and houses resounded with the symphony of musical instruments and songs, and appeared illuminated with a great blaze of lights, which turned night into day. It was a few days after this memorable banquet, that Nero, who had

already surpassed all men, as Tacitus observes, in every kind of abomination, was prompted, by his extravagant lewdness and folly, to such excesses, as would seem altogether incredible, were they not attested by historians, who lived near those times, and whose veracity cannot be questioned. He attired himself in the habit of a woman, and, as such, was publicly, with the usual forms and solemnity, married to a pathic of his contaminated crew, named Pythagoras. Not satisfied with such monstrous and unheard-of impiety and pollutions, as he was the wife of one pathic, so he became the husband of another, named Sporus, whom he married with the same solemnity, kept in his palace, and carried about with him all over Italy and Greece in the same litter, and in the attire of an empress (1).

(1) Tacit. Annal. lib. xv. cap. 57. Sueton. cap. 28, 29.

for

for themselves, occasioned a mutual interruption, and universal confusion. Many, while they chiefly regarded the danger that pursued them behind, found themselves suddenly involved in the flame before, and on every side. If they escaped in the quarters adjoining, or into the parts quite remote, there too they met with the devouring flames. At last, not knowing whither to fly, nor where to seek sanctuary, they abandoned the city, and repaired to the open fields. Some, out of despair for the loss of their whole substance, others, through tenderness for their children and relations, whom they had not been able to snatch from the flames, suffered themselves to perish, though they had easy means to escape. No man dared to stop the progress of the fire, there being many who prevented, with repeated menaces, all attempts of that nature; and some were openly seen to throw lighted fire-brands into the houses, declaring, that they were authorized to do so; but whether this was only a device to plunder more freely, or in reality they had such orders, was never certainly known.

Nero, who was then at Antium, did not attempt to return to the city till he heard that the flame was advancing to his palace, which, after his arrival was, notwithstanding all efforts to prevent it, burnt down to the ground, with all the houses adjoining. However, the emperor, affecting compassion for the multitude, thus bereft of their dwellings, opened the field of Mars, and all the great edifices erected there by Agrippa, and even his own gardens. He likewise caused tents to be pitched in haste for the reception of the forlorn populace; from Ostia, and the neighbouring cities, were brought, by his orders, all sorts of furniture and necessaries, and the price of corn was considerably lessened. These bounties, however generous and popular, were bestowed in vain, because a report was propagated, that during the time of this general conflagration, he mounted his domestic stage, and sung the destruction of Troy, comparing the present desolation to the celebrated calamities of antiquity. At length, on the sixth day, the fury of the flames was stopped at the foot of Mount Esquiline, by leveling with the ground an infinite number of buildings; so that the fire found nothing to encounter but the open fields and empty air.

*The fire
extinguished,*

*but breaks
out anew.*

Scarce had the late alarm ceased, when the fire broke out again with fresh rage, but in places more wide and spacious; whence fewer persons were destroyed, but more temples overthrown, together with porticoes appropriated to public diversions. As this second conflagration burst out in certain buildings belonging to Tigellinus, they were both

both ascribed to Nero; and it was conjectured, that by destroying the old edifices, he aimed at the glory of building a new city, and calling it by his own name. Of the fourteen quarters into which Rome was divided, four remained intire, three were laid in ashes, and, in the seven others, there remained only a few houses, miserably shattered, and half consumed^k. Among the many ancient and stately edifices, which the rage of the flames utterly consumed, Tacitus reckons the temple dedicated by Servius Tullius to the Moon; the temple and great altar consecrated by Evander to Hercules; the chapel vowed by Romulus to Jupiter Stator; the court of Numa, with the temple of Vesta, and in it the tutelar gods peculiar to the Romans. In the same fate were involved the inestimable treasures acquired by so many victories, the wonderful works of the best painters and sculptors of Greece, and, what is still more to be lamented, the ancient writings of celebrated authors, till then preserved perfectly entire. It was observed, that the fire began the same day on which the Gauls, having formerly taken the city, burnt it to the ground^l.

Many noble buildings utterly consumed.

Upon the ruins of the demolished city Nero founded a palace, which he called his Golden House; though it was not so much admired on account of its immense profusion of gold, precious stones, and other inestimable ornaments, as for its vast extent, containing spacious fields, large wildernesses, artificial lakes, thick woods, gardens, orchards, vineyards, hills, and groves. The entrance of this stately edifice was wide enough to receive a colossus, representing Nero, a hundred and twenty feet high: the galleries consisted of three rows of tall pillars, each of them a full mile in length: the lakes were encompassed with magnificent buildings, in the manner of cities, and the woods stocked with all manner of wild beasts. The house itself was tiled with gold, the walls were covered with the same metal, and richly adorned with precious stones and mother-of-pearl, which, in those days, was valued above gold: the timber-work, and cielings of the rooms, were inlaid with gold and ivory: the roof of one of the banqueting-rooms resembled the firmament, both in its figure and motion, turning incessantly about night and day, and showering all sorts of sweet waters. When this magnificent structure was finished, Nero slightly said, that at length he began to lodge like a man. Pliny tells us, that this palace extended quite round the city^m. Nero, it seems, did not finish

Nero's golden palace.

^k Tacit. Annal. lib. xv. cap. 38—40.
^m Plin. lib. xxxiii. cap. 3.

^l Idem ibid. cap. 41.

it^s for the first order Otho signed was, as we read in Suetonius, for fifty millions of sesterces, to be employed in perfecting the Golden Palace which Nero had begun ^a.

*Under-
takes things
impossible.*

The projectors of this plan were Severus and Celer, two bold and enterprising men, who, soon after, put the emperor upon a still more expensive and arduous undertaking, namely, that of cutting a canal through hard rocks, and steep mountains, from the lake Avernus to the mouth of the Tiber, a hundred and sixty miles in length, and of such breadth, that two galleys of five ranks of oars might easily pass abreast. His view in this was to open a communication between Rome and Campania, free from the troubles and dangers of the sea; for in the course of this year, a great number of vessels laden with corn, were shipwrecked at cape Misenum, the pilots choosing rather to venture out in a violent storm, than not to arrive at the time they were expected by Nero. For the execution of this prodigious undertaking, the emperor ordered the prisoners from all parts to be transported into Italy; and such as were convicted, whatever their crimes were, to be condemned only to his works. Nero, who undertook nothing with more ardour and readiness than what was deemed impossible, expended incredible sums in this rash undertaking, and exerted all his power, to cut through the mountains adjoining to the lake Avernus; but not being able to remove by art the obstacles of nature, he was obliged to drop the enterprize ^b.

*Rome re-
built.*

The ground, not occupied by the foundations of Nero's own palace, he assigned for houses, which were not placed, as after the burning of the city by the Gauls, at random, and without order, but the streets were laid out regularly, spacious and strait; the edifices restrained to a certain height, perhaps of seventy feet, according to the plan of Augustus; the courts were widened, and to all the great houses which stood by themselves, and were called isles, large porticoes were added, which Nero engaged to raise at his own expence, and to deliver to each proprietor the squares about them clear from all rubbish. He likewise promised rewards according to very man's rank and substance, appointing a day for the discharge of his promise, on condition that against that day their several houses and palaces were finished. He moreover made the following wise regulations, to obviate such a dreadful calamity for the future: that the new buildings should be raised to a certain

*Precautions
to prevent
the like dis-
aster.*

^a Suet. cap. 31. & in Oth. cap. 7.
cap. 46.

^b Tacit. Annal. lib. xv.

height without timber; that they should be arched with stone from the quarries of Gabii and Alba, which were proof against fire; that over the common springs, which were diverted by private men for their own uses, overseers should be placed to prevent that abuse; that every citizen should have ready in his house a machine proper to extinguish fire; and that no wall should be common to two houses, but every house be inclosed within its own peculiar walls. Thus the city in a short time rose out of its ashes with new lustre, and more beautiful than ever. As Nero, notwithstanding all his bounties, was still believed to be the author of the conflagration, in order to wipe off this aspersions, he transferred the guilt upon the Christians, who were already very numerous in the city, and against them raised the first general persecution. Tacitus says, "Nero, to suppress the prevailing rumour, that he was the author of the conflagration, transferred the guilt upon supposed criminals, subjecting to most exquisite torments those people, who for their enormous crimes were already universally abhorred, and known to the vulgar by the name of Christians. The author of this name was Christ, who in the reign of Tiberius was executed under Pontius Pilate, procurator of Judæa. The pestilent superstition was for a while suppressed; but it revived again, and spread, not only over Judæa, where this evil was first broached, but reached Rome, whither from every quarter of the earth is constantly flowing whatever is hideous and abominable amongst men, and is there readily embraced and practised. First, therefore, were apprehended such as openly owned themselves to be of that sect; then by them was discovered an immense multitude, and all were convicted, not of the crime of burning of Rome, but of their hatred and enmity to mankind. Their death and torture were aggravated with cruel derision and sport; for they were either covered with the skins of wild beasts, and torn in pieces by devouring dogs; or fastened to crosses, or wrapped up in combustible garments, that when the day-light failed, they might, like torches, serve to dispel the darkness of the night. For this tragical spectacle Nero lent his own gardens, and exhibited at the same time the public diversion of the circus, sometimes driving a chariot in person, and sometimes standing as a spectator among the populace in the habit of a charioteer. Hence towards the miserable sufferers, however guilty and deserving the most exemplary punishment, compassion arose, seeing they were doomed to perish, not with a view to the public good, but to gratify the cruelty of one man."

Nero pretends that the Christians burnt the city.

Tacitus's account of them.

man P." Thus far Tacitus, who, it is manifest, was quite unacquainted with the sacred mysteries and sound morals of our religion.

*Nero be-
takes him-
self to all
manner of
rapine.
Plunders
Italy and
the pro-
vinces.*

In the mean time Nero, having, with the immense sums expended in building his golden house, and embellishing the city, quite drained his exchequer, in order to supply his prodigality betook himself to all manner of rapine and extortion. Not Italy alone, but the provinces, the several confederate nations, and even the cities, were pillaged and laid waste. In this general spoil were involved the temples of the gods, now stripped of all their rich ornaments, of all the treasures which the Roman people in every age of their state had consecrated, either as monuments of triumphs celebrated, or vows fulfilled. Through Greece and Asia the same ravages were committed; Acratus, an imperial freedman, and Secundus Carinas, two ready instruments, as Tacitus styles them, to execute any iniquity, however black and flagrant, being sent into those provinces with a commission to strip every where the temples of all their ornaments, gifts, and oblations; and convey them, together with the statues and images of the gods themselves, to Rome, where they were melted down, and turned into money. Seneca, fearing these sacrileges and iniquitous extortions might be imputed to him, begged permission to retire to a seat of his own, remote from Rome; but that favour being refused him, he confined himself to his chamber, pretending an indisposition in his nerves. In the close of the year, the heads and mouths of the populace were filled with strange prodigies, said to have happened, and always dreaded as the forerunners of some dreadful calamity. A comet too appeared, an omen ever supposed to portend misfortunes threatening some sovereign power: Nero was therefore under no small apprehension; but Babilus the astrologer having acquainted him, that among monarchs it was usual, upon such occasions, to avert these omens from themselves by some extraordinary massacre, he resolved utterly to exterminate the whole senatorial order, and commit the government of the provinces, and the command of the armies, to the knights and his freedmen.

Yr. of Fl.

2414.

A. D. 65.

U. C. 814.

*Piso's con-
spiracy.*

This bloody design he began to put in execution the following year, when A. Licinius, Nerva Silanus, and M. Vestinius Atticus were consuls, a conspiracy, which was then discovered, affording him a pretence for the shocking sacrifice. In this memorable conspiracy were engaged almost

P Tacit. Ann. lib. xv. cap. 44.
in Ner. cap. 32.

1 Ibid. cap. 45.

2 Suet.

the

the whole nobility of Rome; senators, knights, soldiers, and even women, entering into it with great eagerness and competition, partly from their detestation of Nero, and partly from their zeal for Caius Piso, by whom it was headed. He was allied to most of the illustrious families in Rome, and for his own qualifications highly esteemed by the populace; for he was a great orator, and employed his eloquence in the defence of his fellow-citizens; generous to his friends and acquaintance, and even to such as were unknown to him, affable and complaisant: he was of a tall stature, of a graceful countenance, and extremely captivating in his language and address; but so far from being strict and austere in his life and manners, that he observed no restraint in his pleasures, abandoning himself to all manner of debauchery and luxury. He was not, however, the first author of the conspiracy: it was never known by whom the design was first concerted, though Subrius Flavius, tribune of a prætorian cohort, and Sulpicius Asper, a centurion, seem to have been the most forward in promoting its execution.

His character.

Among the first who entered into it, Tacitus names Lucan, the celebrated poet, Plautius Lateranus, consul elect, Flavius Scevius, and Afranius Quinctianus. Lucan was instigated by personal provocations; Nero, who was possessed of an ardent ambition of excelling in poetry, having, from a ridiculous emulation, forbid the publication of his poems: Lateranus engaged in the plot from a sincere affection to the republic. The other two had till that time lived in sloth and debauchery: what prompted Scevius to conspire, we are not told; but Quinctianus became an accomplice in order to be revenged on Nero for having, in a virulent satire, published his scandalous and unnatural lewdness. Rome was surprised, that two men of such characters should engage in an enterprize so hazardous and daring. Those we have mentioned drew into the combination Tullius Senecio, Cervarius Proculus, Vulcatius Araricus, Julius Tugurinus, Munatius Gratus, Antonius Natalis, and Martius Festus; all Roman knights. Among the troops, besides the two officers already mentioned, were engaged as accomplices Granius Silvanus, Statius Proximus, both tribunes of the prætorian bands; Maximus Scaurus, Venetus Paulus, two centurions; and, as their chief strength and dependence, Fenius Rufus, captain of the imperial guards, a man greatly beloved by the people, and on that account hated both by his colleague Tigellinus, and the emperor. The conspirators were no sooner assured that Rufus had joined their party, than they began seriously to debate about

Many persons of distinction concerned in it.

the time and place of the intended assassination. Subrius Flavius undertook to attack Nero, while he was singing on the stage, or scouring the streets in his drunken revels by night, unattended by his guards; but a too great anxiety to escape with impunity, ever unseasonable in great enterprises, restrained his ardour¹.

*Epicharis
animates
the con-
spirators.*

The conspirators deferring from day to day the execution of their design, a woman, named Epicharis, took upon her to quicken their resolves. It was unknown by what means she came to be apprised of the plot; for till that time she had never shewn the least regard to honour, virtue, or honesty. When she found that all her reproaches and exhortations were to no effect, impatient of their delay, she left Rome, and hastened into Campania, where she employed all her industry and skill to gain the chief officers of the fleet riding at Misenum, and to engage them in the design, which they had frequent opportunities of executing, as the emperor greatly delighted in sailing along the coasts of Misenum and Puteoli. In that fleet, Volusius Proculus, who had been employed by Nero to assassinate his mother, had the command of a thousand marines: but as he did not think himself sufficiently rewarded for so meritorious a murder, either from an old acquaintance with Epicharis, or a friendship newly contracted, he related to her his signal services to Nero, venting bitter complaints, that he had not been distinguished with promotion equal to his deserts. In return for this mark of confidence, Epicharis urged all the enormous cruelties, all the barbarous outrages committed by the tyrant, and at the same time acquainted him with the conspiracy; but had the precaution to conceal the names of the conspirators.

*She is ac-
cused to
Nero, but
baffles her
accuser.*

The traitor was no sooner intrusted with the secret, than he flew to Rome, and betrayed the whole to Nero. When Epicharis was summoned, and confronted with the informer, as his charge against her was supported by no witnesses, she denied it, pretending to be greatly amazed at the impudent boldness of the accuser. However, she was detained in prison, Nero suspecting that the charge was not false, though not proved to be true². The conspirators being, notwithstanding the silence of Epicharis, apprehensive of a discovery, came to a resolution to hasten the intended murder, and chose, as the most convenient place for the execution of their design, a villa at Baiæ, belonging to Piso, whither the emperor frequently resorted to bathe and carouse with a small number of attendants. But in this

¹ Tacit. Ann. lib. xv. cap. 48—50.

² Idem ibid. cap. 51, 52.

scheme Piso would by no means concur, alleging the general abhorrence which must ensue, were the sacred rights of hospitality violated by the murder of a prince, however wicked. He thought it more adviseable to dispatch him at Rome, either in the detested house which he had reared with the spoils of the unhappy city, or in the face of the public, since for the benefit of the people the design had been undertaken.

Thus he reasoned openly amongst the conspirators; but in his heart he was influenced by secret motives, fearing lest Lucius Silanus, a man of extraordinary accomplishments, might, as he was then at Rome, upon the first news of Nero's death, seize the vacant sovereignty for himself. He was likewise jealous of the consul Vestinus, fearing he might, as he was a man of great intrepidity, attempt the restoration of the ancient government, or bestow the empire upon some other, as a gift of his own. The conspirators, influenced by the reasonings of Piso, unanimously agreed to execute their design, not at Baïæ, but at Rome, on the anniversary sacred to Ceres, and always solemnized with Circensian games, at which Nero never failed to assist, giving free access to all, during the gaiety of the sports. The design was to be executed in the following manner; Lateranus, who was in slender circumstances, under pretence of imploring relief, was to fall at the prince's feet, and throw him down; then the tribunes, centurions, and other conspirators, were to rush in and dispatch him. Scevinus earnestly claimed the honour of giving the first blow; for having formerly taken a dagger out of a temple, he carried it constantly about him, as consecrated to the execution of some mighty design. It was moreover agreed, that Piso should wait the event in the temple of Ceres, and be thence brought forth by Fenius, captain of the guards, and conducted to the camp.

Piso is jealous of Silanus, and the consul Vestinus.

Scevinus claims the honour of giving the first blow.

The day before that appointed for the execution of the design, Scevinus, after a long conference with Antonius Natalis, sealed his will; then unsheathing the dagger, he complained it was blunt and rusty, charging Milichus, one of his freedmen, to have it ground, and sharpened at the point: next he ordered a repast more sumptuous and profuse than ordinary to be prepared; after which he presented his favourite slaves with their liberty, and others with sums of money: his countenance, in the midst of an affected cheerfulness, appeared clouded: in his discourse he was continually running from one subject to another, without attending to any; when all, who were present, concluded, that his mind was fraught with some great pro-

The conspiracy discovered.

ject : at last he ordered the same Milichus to prepare bandages for wounds, and applications for stopping blood. The freedman, reflecting on these orders, and concluding with himself, that a conspiracy was undoubtedly carrying on, and his patron concerned in it, hastened next morning by break of day to the gardens of Servilius, where Nero then was ; and being refused admittance, declared that he came to discover matters of the utmost importance. Upon this declaration, he was conducted to Epaphroditus, one of Nero's freedmen, and by him presented to the emperor himself, to whom he related all the circumstances he had observed, shewed the dagger, and desired the criminal to be immediately secured.

*Several of
the con-
spirators
seized.*

Accordingly Scevinus was by a band of soldiers hastily seized, and dragged before the emperor ; but defended himself with a spirit so undaunted, and inveighed against the informer as a treacherous wretch, still actuated by the base spirit of a slave, with such firmness and intrepidity, that the informer would have been baffled, had not his wife reminded him, that Antonius Natalis had held a long conference with Scevinus, and that both lived in close confidence with Caius Piso. Natalis was therefore immediately arrested, and both he and Scevinus separately examined concerning the particulars of that conference. As their answers were contradictory, they were thrown into irons, and threatened with the rack ; the sight of which neither of them being able to bear, they discovered every particular of the conspiracy. Natalis confessed the first, and declared how far Piso was concerned in the plot, and named also Seneca ; but whether this last had acted as an agent between him and Piso, or whether Natalis impeached him only to purchase the favour of Nero, who was daily hunting after some specious pretence to destroy him, is uncertain. Scevinus, understanding that Natalis had made a confession, and that no advantage could be reaped from his silence, at length discovered all the other accomplices. Of these Lucan, Quinctianus, and Senecio, persisted long in denying the charge ; but at length were seduced by a promise of impunity ; and then, to atone for their backwardness, they informed against their dearest friends, Lucan against Attilia his own mother, Quinctianus against Glicius Gallus, and Senecio against Annius Pollio.

*The firm-
ness and
intrepidity
of Epicharis.*

Nero, recollecting that Epicharis was detained in prison, and supposing that she could endure the violence of the rack, commanded her to be put to the severest torture. But her firmness and magnanimity were proof against the fury of stripes, of fire, and of all the torments the executioners

tioners could invent, though they exerted their utmost efforts in cruelty, lest they should be at last derided and baffled by a woman. She still utterly denied every particular; and such was the issue of the first day's torture. Next day, as she was reconducting in a chair to suffer again the same torments (for her limbs were so torn and disjointed, that she could not support herself), with the girdle, that bound her breasts, she framed a noose for her neck, and tying it to the top of the chair, hung upon it with all the weight of her body, and put an end to the poor remains of life. Thus a woman, who was once a slave, heroically suffered the most exquisite torments cruelty could invent, and death itself, to protect persons whom she scarce knew; when men born free, when Roman knights and senators, betrayed their dearest friends, their nearest relations: for Lucan, Senecio, and Quinctianus, were daily making new discoveries, and still naming more accomplices; a detail which so terrified Nero, that he not only doubled his guards, but posted bands of soldiers upon the walls, and all round the city, lined the sea-coast, and the banks of the Tiber, with numerous detachments, ordered parties of foot and horse to scour the fields night and day, to range in the public squares, in the neighbouring municipal towns, and to enter the private houses. With the prætorian guards Germans were intermixed; for in them, as they were foreigners, Nero chiefly confided.

She hangs herself with her girdle.

Nero's great consternation.

And now the accused were dragged in troops to Nero's tribunal, which was erected in his garden; and they lay together at the gates, expecting to be successively admitted and examined. If upon their trial it appeared, that they had ever been seen smiling with any of the conspirators; that they had ever spoke with them, met them, however fortuitously, been common guests at the same table, or sat together at the same public show; any of these circumstances was imputed as an unpardonable crime. The judges were Nero himself, Tigellinus and his colleague Fenius Rufus, who, as he was not yet accused, proved more severe than the other two in examining his own associates, in order to persuade the prince, that he was a stranger to the plot. It was owing to him, that the design was not put in execution even during the examination of the conspirators; for the brave tribune, Subrius Flavius, who attended, and was not yet impeached or suspected, having demanded by signs, whether he should dispatch the tyrant, was by contrary signs checked and forbid, when he had al-

Great numbers of people seized.

Flavius offers to kill Nero, but is checked by Fenius Rufus.

ready grasped the hilt of his sword. When the conspiracy was first discovered, there were some who exhorted Piso to proceed directly to the camp, or mount the rostrum, and try the affections of the people and soldiery, since nothing worse could befall him, though both the soldiery and people should not join him, than he must already expect: they represented that, by losing his life in so glorious an attempt, he would approve himself worthy of his ancestors, and leave a noble example to posterity; whereas, if he neglected the present opportunity, he would be soon seized, and condemned to an ignominious death. Piso, rejecting the advice of his friends and associates, the best that could be given him at the present juncture, retired to his own house, where, upon the arrival of a band of soldiers to seize him, he opened the veins in both his arms, and bled to death (F).

*Piso de-
fends him-
self.*

*Plautius
Lateranus
dies with
intrepidity.*

Next followed the death of Plautius Lateranus, consul elect, inflicted with such precipitation, that he was not allowed time even to embrace his children; but instantly dragged to the place allotted for the execution of slaves, and there slaughtered by the hand of Statius the tribune. He died with exemplary firmness and intrepidity, uttered not a syllable relating to the conspiracy; but with an undaunted spirit answered Epaphroditus, the emperor's freed-man and secretary, who asked him some questions, "If I were mean enough to make any discoveries, it would be to your master, not to you." He did not even upbraid the tribune appointed to cut off his head, though he too was concerned with him in the conspiracy.

*The parti-
culars of
Seneca's
death.*

The next illustrious person sacrificed on this occasion, was Annæus Seneca, to the infinite joy of Nero, who had been long seeking his destruction. Natalis alone had accused him, though what he said of him amounted to very little. He declared, that he had been sent by Piso to visit Seneca, then indisposed, to complain in his name, that he was debarred access to him, and to represent, that it would be better if they maintained their friendship by familiar conversation; that to this message Seneca replied, that frequent interviews and conversations by themselves were conducive to the service of neither; but that upon the safety of Piso his own welfare depended. Granius Silvanus, tribune of a

* Tacit. Annal. lib. xv. cap. 60.

(F) He left a will full of fulsome flattery towards Nero; and this out of tenderness to his wife Arria Galla, whom he had taken from Domitius Silius, a

friend of his own, though she was a woman of most vicious inclinations, and, except the beauty of her person, destitute of every recommendation.

prætorian

prætorian cohort, was sent to Seneca, with orders to ask him, whether he owned the words of Natalis, and his own answers: Seneca had returned that very day from Campania, and stopped at a villa of his, four miles from Rome. The tribune arriving in the evening, beset the villa with his men, entered the house, and acquainted Seneca with his commission, while he sat at table with Paulina his wife, and two friends. Seneca answered, that Natalis had indeed been sent to him, and had complained in Piso's name, that he was refused admittance; a complaint which he had answered by excusing himself on account of his bodily disorders, and his love of quiet. He denied to have ever declared, that his safety depended upon that of any private man; adding, that he was not at all addicted to flattery, as no man better knew than Nero,

When this answer was by the tribune reported to the emperor, he asked, whether Seneca seemed determined upon a voluntary death? I have not discovered, replied the tribune, either in his words or looks, the least symptom of fear. Nero then commanded him to return directly, and acquaint him that he must die. The tribune, who was himself one of the conspirators, took not the same way he came; but turning aside, went first to Fenius, captain of the guards, and, disclosing the emperor's orders, asked, whether he should obey them? The cowardly commander advised him to execute his commission, and act in every respect as if he were an utter stranger to the plot. Thus Fenius and Silvanus, through a baseness and timidity hardly to be credited, contributed to multiply those very cruelties which they had conspired to avenge. However, the tribune avoided seeing Seneca, and delivering in person the message; but dispatched a centurion to apprise him of his fate. Seneca heard the sentence without betraying the least dismay or concern, and calmly called for his will; but that being denied him by the centurion, turning to his friends, he told them, that since he was prevented from gratefully acknowledging their favours, he bequeathed them that which alone was now left him, the pattern of his life. He repressed their tears, sometimes with gentle reasoning, sometimes with sharp rebukes, asking them, where were now all the documents of philosophy? where the precepts of wisdom so many years acquiring against impending calamities? for to whom, said he, is unknown the bloody nature of Nero? After the murder of his mother and brother, what remained, but to add to their's the slaughter of his preceptor and instructor? After he had discoursed some time to the company in general, he embraced his wife; an af-

He is acquainted by a centurion that he must die.

affecting object ! which somewhat abated his firmness, and seemed to subdue his philosophical spirit. He besought her to moderate her sorrow, and to fortify herself against the grief arising from the loss of her husband, by the contemplation of his life spent in a steady course of virtue.

The constancy of his wife.

Paulina, on the contrary, resolutely declared, that she was determined to die with him. This declaration surprised Seneca, who, unwilling to deprive her of so much glory, and unwilling to leave one whom he tenderly loved, exposed to insults and injuries, after a short pause, " Since to the delights of a short life you prefer (said he) the everlasting fame of a glorious death, I shall not envy you this honour : let us share the glory of so brave an action, though your share will be by far the greater." After this conversation, both had the veins of their arms opened at the same instant. As Seneca was aged, and his body emaciated, his blood issued but slowly ; he therefore caused the veins of his legs, and those about the joints of his knees, to be likewise cut. As he suffered cruel agonies, he persuaded his wife to retire into another chamber, lest his torments should shake her resolution, or he himself, affected with her pangs, betray weakness and impatience. As his eloquence did not fail him to the last moment of his life, he called for his scribes, and dictated many things, which were published after his death.

She is prevented from dying by Nero's orders.

As Nero bore no personal enmity to Paulina, and was well apprised that her death would double the hatred of the public towards him, he sent orders to the soldiers to prevent her from dying ; who thereupon commanded her domestic slaves and freedmen to bind up her arms, and stop the blood. She outlived her husband but a few years, ever pale and in a languishing condition, and retained to the last a reverence for his memory. Seneca in the mean time, to hasten his death, which advanced very slowly, besought Statius Annæus, an intimate friend, well skilled in medicine, to bring a draught of poison, which he had prepared long before, and kept by him. This he swallowed, without effect, his limbs being chilled with cold, and his juices stagnated. He had therefore recourse to a hot bath, to hasten by warmth the operation of the poison, or to make his blood flow more freely. With the water of the bath he sprinkled such of his slaves as stood near him, saying, " With this liquor I make a libation to Jupiter the Deliverer." As the bath had not the desired effect, and the soldiers were impatient, he was at last conveyed into a stove, and there suffocated with the steam. His body was burnt without any funeral solemnity, pursuant to a will which he had made,

Seneca takes poison in vain.

His last words.

Is suffocated in a hot bath.

even

even while he was in high favour with his prince *. Thus died the celebrated L. Annæus Seneca, on the twelfth, or, as others will have it, on the thirteenth of April (G).

Hitherto Fenius Rufus had proceeded with great severity against the conspirators his accomplices; but was himself in the end detected: for while in the examination of Flavius Scevinus, the senator, he urged him with many menaces to an ample confession, Scevinus smiled, and told him, that no man was better acquainted with the particulars of the plot than himself. Fenius attempted to refute the charge; but faltering and perplexed in his speech, he gave manifest tokens of his guilt and terror; in consequence of which, he was by the emperor's orders immediately seized, and dragged to prison. At the same time the brave tribune Subrius Flavius was impeached. He at first defended himself; but being pressed by the informers, he not only owned the charge, but gloried in it; and in answer to Nero, who asked him, upon what provocation he had slighted the obligation of his oath, "Because I abhorred thee (said he), though there was not in the whole army one more zealously attached to thee than I, so long as thou didst merit affection; but I began to hate thee when thou becamest the murderer of thy mother, the murderer of thy brother and wife, a charioteer, a comedian, and an incendiary." Tacitus tells us, that the whole conspiracy afforded nothing which proved so bitter and pungent to Nero as this reproach. He ordered Flavius to be immediately put to death, committing the execution to Veianus Niger, a tribune, who led him into the nearest field, and there ordered a funeral trench to be dug, such as served for a grave to the soldiers, who died in the camp. Flavius found fault with it, as too straight and shallow; and, turning to the guard of soldiers, "This (said he, without betraying the least concern), is not even done according to the laws of discipline." When the tribune desired him to stretch out his neck valiantly, "I wish (replied he), thou mayst strike as valiantly:" and indeed the tribune was seized with such a violent trepidation, that he with difficulty cut off his head at two strokes. However, he afterwards boasted to Nero, that he had designedly employed more blows than one.

Fenius Rufus is accused and apprehended.

Subrius Flavius reviles Nero to his face.

His last brave words, and contempt of death.

The next example of firmness and constancy was exhibited by Sulpicius Asper, the centurion; who being asked

* Tacit. Annal. lib. xv. cap. 62, 64.

(G) Dio Cassius assures us, Tacitus does not attempt to clear him. that he was privy to the conspiracy; from which charge

*Fenius
Rufus dies
meanly.*

by Nero, why he had conspired against him, answered in a few words, "Because there was no other relief against thy abominable enormities." The other centurions faced death with equal bravery: but Fenius Rufus betrayed a timidity unbecoming a man of his rank and profession; he even filled his last will with unmanly lamentations. Nero hoped to find the consul Vestinus likewise concerned in the conspiracy; but as he was a man of a violent spirit, and altogether untractable, the conspirators had not thought fit to make him acquainted with their design. He had once lived in close confidence with Nero; but afterwards abusing the freedom which the emperor allowed him, and utterly despising him, he used frequently to insult the prince with poignant sarcasms, which left behind them a bitter remembrance, as they were for the most part founded on truth. Besides, Nero dreaded the haughty and violent temper of Vestinus; and therefore wished for a plausible pretence to destroy him; but as no accuser appeared to charge him, since he could not satiate his rancour under the title of a judge, he had recourse to the violence of a tyrant, and dispatched Gerellanus the tribune, at the head of five hundred men, with orders to dispose of the consul.

*The quick
and brave
death of
the consul
Vestinus.*

He had that day discharged all the functions of a consul, and was celebrating a banquet at home with great gaiety, when the soldiers entering told them, that the tribune waited for him. Vestinus, without delay, rose from table, and in a few minutes the tragedy was begun and finished; he was shut up in a chamber; the physician attended; his veins were cut, he was conveyed into a hot bath, and suffocated with the steam, without uttering a syllable that argued either grief or concern. In the mean time the whole company that supped with them were beset by a guard, and not released till the night was far spent, Nero diverting himself with the fears of men, who had passed at once from the mirth and joy of a feast, to the deadly apprehension of their last moments. At length he ordered the guards to withdraw, saying, that the consul's guests had paid dear enough for their good cheer.

*Lucan dies
with great
intrepidity.*

Lucan the poet was next sentenced to die. His veins being opened, and his blood issuing in streams, he soon perceived his feet and hands growing cold and stiff; but before his faculties were impaired, recollecting some lines of his own, in which he described a wounded soldier expiring after the same manner, he rehearsed them, and they were

the last words he uttered * (H). Senecio, Quintianus, and Scevinus, suffered death with a spirit far different from the former effeminacy of their lives. The other conspirators were put to death, without speaking or doing any thing worthy of notice.

Antonius Natalis and Cervarius Proculus were pardoned, in consideration of their early confession and discovery. Milichus the freedman was amply rewarded, and honoured with a Greek name, signifying Protector. Granius Silvanus, one of the tribunes of the prætorian guards, obtained his pardon; but soon after, scorning to owe his life to the tyrant, fell by his own hand. All the friends of Seneca, though rather calumniated than convicted, were condemned to banishment. Cæsonius Maximus, and Cadicia, the wife of Scevinus, were driven out of Italy, and only by their punishment knew that they had been charged as criminals. The accusation against Attilia, Lucan's mother, was dropped; so that without being cleared, she escaped unpunished †.

The conspiracy being entirely suppressed, and the conspirators sentenced to death or banishment, Nero assembled the soldiery, bestowed on each the sum of two thousand nummi a man, and ordered them to be thenceforth supplied with corn at the public expence. Upon Petronius Turpilianus, Cocceius Nerva, and Tigellinus, he decreed triumphal ornaments, as a reward for their zeal in prosecuting the conspirators: he also caused triumphal statues to be erected in the forum to the two latter, and their images to be placed in the palace; a distinction seldom granted, and only to persons of the greatest merit. Nymphidius was distinguished with the consular ornaments.

He rewards the instruments of his cruelty.

The emperor having thus rewarded the instruments of his tyranny, assembled the fathers, and acquainted them with the late transactions. To the people likewise he addressed an edict upon the same subject, and published the several evidences against the conspirators, with their own confessions, in order to confute a rumour current among the populace, that the plot was forged; and that Nero, merely to

* Tacit. Ann. lib. xv. cap. 70.

† Idem ibid. cap. 73.

(H) Suetonius, or whoever else is the author of his life, tells us, that his behaviour towards Nero, who loved him, was such as would have pro-

voked the best of princes. His informing falsely against his own mother, will reflect eternal ignominy on his memory (9).

*The servile
flattery of
the senate.*

satiate his cruelty, had sacrificed so many illustrious citizens. In the senate, where the most abject flattery prevailed, every senator, the more sensibly he was affected with inward grief for the loss of his friends or relations, the more outward joy and congratulations he expressed. It was by the whole body decreed, that public thanksgivings and oblations should be paid to all the deities, and particular honours to the Sun, who having a chapel in the circus, where the parricide was to be perpetrated, had brought to light the dark contrivances of the conspirators; that the Circensian games should be solemnized with extraordinary pomp; that the month of April, in which the conspiracy was detected, should in future bear the name of Nero; and that a temple should be erected to the goddesses Salus or Safety, in the place whence Scevinus had taken the dagger. The dagger itself was by Nero dedicated in the Capitol, with this inscription, "To Jupiter the Avenger."

*Nero re-
sumes his
harp;*

*and ap-
pears on
the stage as
a competi-
tor for the
prizes.*

Nero, now delivered from all his fear, devoted himself again to his harp. As the time approached for disputing the prizes in the quinquennial games, the senate, to prevent Nero from appearing there as a competitor, offered him the prize of music, and also the crown of eloquence: but the emperor replied, that he needed not their partiality; since he was a match for all his competitors, and would only, by the just determination of the judges, obtain the praise and recompence of his skill. He appeared therefore publicly upon the stage, and rehearsed a poem of his own composing; but the populace applauding him, and begging he would display all his studies (for these were their words), he entered the great theatre, and appearing amongst the common harpers and minstrels, contending with them for the prize with such eagerness and anxiety, that he never ventured to sit down, however fatigued, that being contrary to the established laws of the harp, nor to spit, nor to wipe the sweat from his face, except only with his arm. In the end, supplicating the multitude with his knee bent, and his hands lifted up, according to the custom of the common players, he waited with awe and reverence the determination of the judges. The common people of Rome applauded him with loud shouts, and clapping of hands; but the inhabitants of the municipal cities of Italy, who still retained the severe manners of the ancients, and such as came from remote provinces, and attended then at Rome upon embassies, or their own private affairs, could not behold without indignation, the sovereign of Rome thus debasing himself upon the stage, and much less join those who applauded this his shameful humiliation. They were therefore

therefore frequently beaten by the soldiers, who stood in groups among the crowd, to observe the behaviour of the spectators ^b (I).

This year the death of Poppæa, Nero's wife, filled Rome in appearance with grief and mourning, but in reality with much joy; for she was no less abhorred than her husband, on account of her lewdness and cruelty. She was killed by Nero himself with a kick on the belly, when she was pregnant, for finding fault with him, as Suetonius tells us, upon his coming home late ^c; or because she rallied him, as we read in Dio Cassius ^d, upon his skill and address in chariot-driving. Her body was not burnt, according to the Roman custom; but after the manner of foreign monarchs, embalmed and deposited in the sepulchre of the

The death of Poppæa.

^b Tacit. Annal. lib. xvi. cap. 5.
lib. lxii. p. 71.

^c Suet. cap. 35.

^d Dio,

^e Tacit. Annal. lib. xvi. cap. 6.

(I) Nero, encouraged with the applause of the multitude, appeared thenceforth almost every day on the stage, inviting not only the senators and knights, but likewise the populace, and the whole rabble of Rome, to hear him, though he performed for the most part in the theatre, which he had built in the palace. He often kept the audience not only the whole day, but the night too; for till he was tired, and gave over, no one was allowed to depart upon any occasion, however necessary and urging: in so much that women are said to have been delivered in the theatre, and several persons so tired, that finding the gates of the palace shut, they either leaped privately over the wall, or in order to be carried out, pretended to be in a swoon (1); some by never stirring night nor day from their seats, were seized with mortal distempers, which however they dreaded less than the prince's resentment, which

they unavoidably incurred by their absence: besides the several concealed and private observers, employed to mark the carriage of the audience, there were numbers of open spies, who publicly set down the names of such as were present, observed their countenances, and noticed all the symptoms of pleasure or dissatisfaction in every one present: the vulgar were immediately punished by the soldiery for the least inattention; towards persons of rank the emperor's resentment was for the present smothered, but vented at last in a more dreadful manner. We are told, that Vespasian, afterwards emperor, was not only bitterly reproached by Phœbus, Nero's freedman, but charged as a criminal, for having nodded while the emperor was singing: this inattention would have cost him his life, had not his friends, men of great rank and merit, employed their prayers and mediation in his behalf.

(1) Sueton, cap. 23.

Julian family. Her obsequies were celebrated with the utmost pomp, and her panegyric pronounced from the public rostrum by the emperor himself * (K). Soon after he married Statilia Messalina, the widow of the late consul Atticus Vestinus, and descended from Statilius Taurus, who had been twice consul in the reign of Augustus. She too, as appears from ancient medals †, was honoured with the title of Augusta.

Junius Silanus condemned;

Not long after the death of Poppæa, Nero devoted to destruction two of the greatest men in Rome, Caius Cassius Longinus, a learned civilian, and L. Junius Silanus Torquatus; the former for his great wealth, and the exemplary gravity of his manners; the latter, because he was related to the Cæsars, and for his modesty, and other eminent qualities, judged by the Roman people worthy of the empire. Cassius was blind, very aged, and led a retired life, as did likewise Silanus, though in the prime of his youth, having from the late bloody catastrophe of his uncle Torquatus, who had assumed the demeanour of a prince, learned to shun all outward appearance of grandeur. However, the very same imputations, which had been formerly urged against his uncle, were advanced against him; that he aspired at the sovereign power, affected more majesty and state than became a private citizen, kept about him men with the title of principal secretaries, procurators, auditors of the revenues, and treasurers; names and offices of imperial grandeur, which he already personated: imputations utterly false and groundless.

and Cassius Longinus.

To Cassius, Nero objected, that amongst the images of his ancestors, he preserved in the highest reverence that of Caius Cassius, thus inscribed, "The leader of the party." At the same time he suborned certain persons to accuse Lepida, the wife of Cassius, and aunt to Silanus, of being

* Tacit. Ann. lib. xvi. cap. 6.

† Goltz, p. 46.

(K) Pliny assures us, that more perfumes were burnt at her funeral than Arabia Felix produced in a year (1). She constantly kept and carried about with her, if Dio Cassius is to be credited (2), five hundred asses, and daily bathed in their milk for the preservation of her beauty. Upon the death of Poppæa, Nero intended to marry Antonia the daughter of Claudius, and his own sister by adoption; but she declined the match, and was on that account by his orders put to death, on pretence she had been concerned in the conspiracy of Piso (3).

(1) Plin. lib. xii. cap. 18.
cap. 35.

(2) Dio, lib. lxi. p. 72.

(3) Suet.

guilty

guilty of incest with her nephew, and practising magical rites of a mischievous tendency. Against Cassius and Silanus the senate pronounced sentence of perpetual banishment, but referred the punishment of Lepida to the judgment of the emperor. Cassius was transported into Sardinia, and in respect to his great age, the short remains of his life were spared. Silanus was conveyed to Ostia, and afterwards confined in Barium, a city of Apulia, where a centurion, commissioned to put him to death, advised him to cut his veins. Silanus answered, that he was not fond of life; but that no executioner should have the glory of putting him to death. In consequence of this declaration, the centurion ordered his men to secure him; but Silanus, who was a young man of great strength, resolute and daring, though destitute of arms, made a vigorous resistance, till he fell by the centurion, under a multitude of wounds * (L).

* Tacit. Annal. lib. xvi. cap. 7, 8.

(L) With no less intrepidity died Lucius Vetus, and his mother-in law Sextia, with Pollutia his daughter. Nero had long hated them as standing reproaches upon him for the murder of Rubellius Plautus, the husband of Pollutia, and son-in-law to Vetus. He therefore suborned a freedman of Vetus to accuse him, and then sent a guard of soldiers to seize him at one of his seats in the neighbourhood of Formiæ. His daughter Pollutia flew to Naples, where the emperor then was; and endeavoured to mollify him by supplications; but finding him implacable, she returned to her father, and acquainted him, that he must banish all hope, and with intrepidity meet a fate, which he could not avoid. He accordingly distributed amongst his domestics whatever sums of money were then in his possession, and at the same time ordered them to remove and appro-

priate to themselves the rich furniture of his villa. Then retiring with his mother-in-law Sextia, and his daughter Pollutia, into a private apartment, they all three opened their veins in the same chamber, with the same instrument; and were conveyed into a warm bath, where they bled to death (1).

P. Gallus, a Roman knight, formerly intimate with Fenius Rufus, and a friend to Vetus, was banished. To the freedman, the accuser, a place was assigned in the theatre among the officers of the tribunes of the people.

As the name of April had been already changed into that of Nero, the name of May into that of Claudius, so was the name of June now changed into that of Germanicus, Cornelius Orfitus moving, that the name of June should be abolished, since two of the Junii Torquati, already executed for treason, had rendered it abominable (2).

(1) Tacit. Ann. lib. xvi. cap. 10, 11.

(2) Idem ibid. cap. 12, 13.

*Campania
ravaged
with
dreadful
tempests.*

This year Campania was ravaged with dreadful tempests, and violent whirlwinds; whole villages were overturned, plantations torn up, and the fruits of the earth destroyed. At the same time a terrible pestilence raged at Rome, and swept away in a short space above thirty thousand persons of all ranks and conditions. The senators and knights were less pitied, as our historian observes, since by a contagion common to all, they escaped falling by the cruelty of the prince. Nero, after so many accumulated acts of tyranny, shewed this year some compassion to the inhabitants of Lyons, whom he presented with a large sum to repair the damage their city had suffered by fire.

*Several
persons put
to death.*

In the following consulship of C. Suetonius Paulinus and C. Lucius Telestinus, Sossianus, who had been condemned to perpetual banishment, for some virulent verses composed against Nero, having insinuated himself into the friendship of Pammenes, who was an exile in the same place, and celebrated for his knowledge in the mysteries of astrology, observed that messengers were daily arriving to consult him, and at the same time learned that a yearly stipend was allowed him by P. Anteius. Upon this intelligence, he intercepted letters from Anteius, and even stole the papers containing the calculation of his nativity, and a scheme drawn, concerning the birth and fortune of Ostorius Scapula. He then wrote to the emperor, that he had important discoveries to communicate; for Anteius and Ostorius were meditating some dangerous attempt upon the state, and diving into their own destiny, and that of Cæsar. Light vessels were immediately dispatched, and Sossianus was, with all possible expedition, transported to Rome; where, upon the first divulging of his discovery, Anteius sealed his last testament, being advised by Tigellinus to lose no time, and then swallowed a draught of poison; but growing impatient of its slow operation, he hastened his death by opening his veins.

*The death
of Anteius,*

Ostorius was then at one of his villas, on the borders of Liguria, whither a centurion was sent with orders to kill him immediately: for Ostorius was a man of extraordinary valour, of prodigious strength, great experience in war, eminently qualified for the command of an army, and had been distinguished in Britain with a civic crown: hence Nero, who ever since the discovery of the late conspiracy, lived under continual apprehension, fearing that brave officer should take arms against him, was glad of any pretence to take his life away. The centurion, having secured all the avenues to the villa, acquainted Ostorius with the emperor's orders, which were no sooner signified to him, than turning

*of Ostorius,
Mella, A-
nicius, &c.*

turning against himself that bravery which he had so often exerted against the enemy, he opened his veins, without betraying the least concern or dismay: but as the blood flowed slowly, he dispatched himself with a poniard, ordering one of his slaves to hold up the weapon steadily; then grasping and strengthening the slave's hand with his own, he ran his throat upon the fatal steel. Within the compass of a few days, Annæus Mella, Cerealis Anicius, Rufus Crispinus, and Caius Petronius, underwent the same bloody fate (M).

After

(M) Caius Petronius, to whom some learned critics ascribe the fragments equally elegant and obscene, which have reached our times, was a man entirely abandoned to voluptuousness. He wasted the day in sleep, and the night in revels: as others had by industry acquired a name and character, Petronius was, by his signal sloth and indolence, raised to notice and fame; he indulged himself in all the gaieties and delights of life; but, at the same time, had the prudence to keep within bounds, and not squander away his estate. Neither was he a slave to his grosser appetites; but exceeding curious and refined in his luxury: his behaviour was extremely obliging and polite; his wit, in which he excelled all men of his time, natural and artless; and all his actions were accompanied with a certain air of negligence. However, he discharged the proconsular government of Bithynia, and soon after the consulship itself, with great reputation, shewing himself in both these employments, equal to the management of the greatest affairs. Then returning to his former vices, he was by Nero admitted to a great intimacy, nothing appearing to the emperor ele-

gant and polite, but what was recommended to him by the taste and approbation of Petronius. This connection Tigellinus could not endure; and therefore to get rid of one, who in credit was his rival, and in the science of pleasures his superior, had recourse to the cruelty and jealousy of the prince, two passions to which all others gave room. He accused Petronius of having lived in great intimacy with the conspirator Scevius; suborned one of his slaves to confirm the charge, and precluded him from all means of defence. Nero happened at that time to be upon the road to Campania, and Petronius, having accompanied him as far as Cumæ, was there by his order arrested. Without flattering himself with vain hopes, or condescending to intreaties, he forthwith resolved to prevent his sentence by a voluntary death, which he underwent in a manner altogether new, but well suited to the life he had led; for having ordered his veins to be cut, he did not shew any eagerness to put an end to his agonies, but directed them to be closed again, and then opened by intervals, just as his fancy moved him, discouraging the whole time with his friends, not upon serious sub-

*Thrasea
and Sora-
nus accus-
ed.*

*Crimes laid
to their
charge.*

After the slaughter of so many illustrious men, Nero at length attempted, says our historian, to extirpate virtue itself in the persons of Barea Soranus, and Thrasea Pætus, long since the objects of his hatred. Thrasea had withdrawn from the senate, as we have related, when the affair of Agrippina came under debate. At the sports, called *Juvenales*, he could not approve of the emperor's acting and singing upon the stage: when the senate intended to condemn Antistius the prætor to death for a virulent satire composed against Nero, he proposed a mitigation of the sentence, and carried it: when divine honours were decreed to Poppæa, he absented himself, and declined attending her funeral: he had not in three years once attended the senate; and though invested with the quindecimviral priesthood, had never made oblations for the safety of the prince, and the preservation of his heavenly voice. These were the crimes urged against Thrasea by Capito Cossutianus, and Marcellus Epirus, two notorious informers. Ottorius Sabinus, a Roman knight, undertook the task of accusing Barea Soranus: the crimes imputed to him, were his friendship with Plautus, who had been murdered by Nero's orders in Asia, and his intrigues with the Asiatics, while he governed them in quality of proconsul, in order to engage them in a revolt. But his real crimes were, his having governed Asia with remarkable vigilance and justice; his opening the port of Ephesus, a work greatly applauded by the Asiatics, and his leaving the inhabitants of Pergamus unpunished for opposing Acratus, one of Nero's freedmen, when he endeavoured to strip their city of all its pictures and statues. The juncture Nero chose for destroying these two great men, was that of the arrival of Tiridates to receive the crown of Armenia, either because the

jects, as if he aimed at the glory of constancy in braving death, but upon indifferent matters, hearkening with attention to gay epigrams, love-verses, and entertaining stories: some of his slaves he rewarded with bounties, others he punished with stripes; he even diverted himself with walking out, and refreshed himself with sleep, that his death, though in reality violent, might appear altogether

natural. In his last will, he flattered neither Nero nor Tigellinus, nor any of the great men in power, as most others had done; but under feigned names of harlots and catamites, described the secret abominations of the emperor; transmitted to him this picture of himself carefully sealed; and then broke his signet, that it might not after his death become a snare to the innocent (1).

(1) Tacit. Ann. lib. xvi. cap. 16—19.

public attention would be wholly engaged in that spectacle; or because Nero meant, on that occasion, to display his greatness and power, by the slaughter of the two most illustrious men in the whole empire. While the whole city flocked to see a foreign king, Thrasea received orders not to attend his entry. In consequence of this order, he addressed a memorial to Nero, beseeching the emperor to acquaint him with the allegations against him, and offering to vindicate himself, were he but apprised of the charge. Nero received the remonstrance greedily, hoping that Thrasea, under the apprehension of his impending fate, might have written something tending to the glory of the prince, and his own discredit; but finding himself disappointed, and dreading the countenance, the high spirit, and free speech of a man so generally esteemed and revered, he ordered the senate to be summoned.

Thrasea having assembled his friends and relations to consult, whether he should attempt a defence, or be silent, Rusticus Arulanus, a young man of great courage, and one of the tribunes of the people, who assisted at the consultation, offered to oppose the decree of the senate: but Thrasea would not allow him to pursue such methods as would in the end prove fatal to his own life. Next day, two cohorts of the prætorian guards surrounded the temple of Venus, where the senate was to meet; all the avenues to it were beset with men in their gowns, the common dress of the city, but armed with swords, which they took no care to conceal; the great squares, and temples, were filled with bands of soldiers under arms. Through these the senators passed to the assembly, where, after a speech sent to them by Nero, and read by his quæstor, in which he openly declared what he required of them, they condemned Thrasea, Soranus, and his daughter Servilia, but granted them the choice of their own deaths. The charge brought against Servilia was, that she had consulted the magicians: this she did not deny; but declared, at the same time, that her consultation had been confined to the conservation of her own family, whether the wrath of Nero might not be appeased, and whether any tragical judgment would follow the cognizance of the senate.

Farther than this she had not inquired; but nevertheless she was brought into the senate, and arraigned by Ostorius Sabinus, who questioned her, whether she had not converted into money all her ornaments, to defray the expence of magic rites and sacrifices. To this question young Servilia, (for she was under twenty), embracing the altars, with a flood of tears, answered, that the whole of her consultation

The firmness of Thrasea.

They are condemned by the senate.

The affecting speech of Servilia in the senate.

tion had been to know, whether the emperor, and the fathers of the senate, would to her dear and indulgent parent, overwhelmed with terror, graciously afford protection and safety. With this view, said she, I presented the diviners, men till now utterly unknown to me, with my jewels, apparel, and the other ornaments peculiar to my quality, as I would have presented my blood and life, had my blood and life been required. But whatever this my conduct was, my unfortunate father was an utter stranger to it; and, if it is a crime, I alone am the delinquent. These words alarmed Soranus, who interrupted her while she was yet uttering them, crying out, that as she was not supposed to be guilty of the crimes laid to his charge, her cause ought to be disjoined from his; that his own fate, whatever it should prove, he was ready to undergo; but hoped, that in the danger of the father they would not involve the innocent daughter. Having thus spoken, he was hastening to embrace his daughter, who flew to meet him; but the consul's lictors interposed ^b.

*Thrasea's
magnani-
mity in
death.*

Sentence was no sooner pronounced against the pretended criminals, than the quæstor was dispatched to Thrasea, who was then in his gardens, reasoning with Demetrius, a Cynic philosopher, about the nature of the soul, and its departure from the body. While he was intent upon this discourse, Domitius Cæcilianus, one of his most intimate friends, arrived, and related to him what the senate had decreed. Thrasea heard him, without betraying, either in his voice or countenance, the least concern; only turning to his friends, who came with Cæcilianus, he embraced them, took his last farewell, and pressed them forthwith to retire, lest they should, for their unseasonable compassion, be involved in the same fate. His wife Arria was very earnest to follow the example of her mother, who bore the same name, and was wife to Cecina Pætus, with whom she died, as we have related elsewhere; but Thrasea would not, by any means, allow her to share in his fate, beseeching her to preserve her life, and not deprive their daughter of her only remaining refuge. He then went into a gallery, and there the quæstor delivered in form the sentence of the senate, which he immediately put in execution, retiring into his chamber with Helvidius, his son-in-law, Demetrius, and the quæstor, in whose presence he ordered the veins of both his arms to be cut. As the blood sprung, he called the quæstor nearer, and sprinkling the floor with it, "Let us (said he to him) make this libation to Jupiter the

^b Tacit. Annal. lib. xvi. cap. 40—43.

Deliverer. Behold, young man; may the gods avert the omen! but you are born in such times, as require you to fortify your mind with examples of constancy." So saying, he was seized with convulsions, and expired¹.

Soon after the death of Thrasea, Nero, to divert the attention of the public from their domestic calamities, received Tiridates with all the pomp of majesty and grandeur imaginable, and crowned him, in one of the great squares, king of Armenia. This was the most magnificent and pompous ceremony that had ever been seen in Rome; but as we have already described it, we shall only add here, that Nero allowed him, during his stay at Rome, eighty thousand nummi a-day, and loaded him, at his departure, with presents of immense value (N). Nero solicited Vologeses, brother to Tiridates, and king of the Parthians, to come likewise to Rome; but in vain, Vologeses only replying, that Nero might, with less trouble, cross the Mediterranean, and come into Asia, where he would endeavour to meet him. The emperor, piqued at this answer, resolved to make war upon the Parthian; and, with this view, made great preparations; ordered the flower of the armies in Illyricum, Germany, and Britain, to march towards the kingdom of Albania; and raised a new legion of Italians, each man six feet high, which he called the Legion of Alexander the Great². But upon intelligence that the Parthian king was inflexible, and prepared on his side for a vigorous defence, he thought it advisable to leave the glory of conquests, and warlike exploits, to others, and confine his ambition to the unprincely honour of playing, singing, and acting upon the stage.

Tiridates crowned king of Armenia by Nero.

Nero resolves to make war on the Parthians;

but changes his mind,

As the time for the celebration of the Olympic games approached, he left Italy, and passed into Greece, with a design to gain the reputation of the best harper, singer, actor, and charioteer in the whole Roman empire. The

and passes into Greece.

¹ Tacit. Annal. lib. xvi. cap. 22—33. p. 719. Suet. cap. 19.

² Dio, lib. lxxiii.

(N) The Armenian, who was a good courtier, had flattered the vain prince, and pretended to be ravished with his harmonious voice, and the skill he displayed in chariot-driving. After the coronation of Tiridates, Nero shut up the temple of Janus, in token of an uni-

versal peace, as appears from a medal, dated the thirteenth year of his reign, which did not begin till the month of October, before which time, that is, in the month of May, the Jews, miserably oppressed by their governors, especially Florus, had taken arms (1).

(1) Vide P. Pagi, Ann. 71.

Greeks, who surpassed all other nations in flattery, understanding that the emperor piqued himself upon his skill in playing upon the harp, had dispatched ambassadors to him with all the crowns designed by their several cities for such players; an honour which was so acceptable to Nero, that he not only gave their messengers audience before any others, but admitted them to an entertainment, which he had prepared for his most intimate friends. On this occasion, one of them having intreated him to sing a song, he immediately complied with his request, and was so captivated with their extravagant flattery, that he cried out, "The Greeks alone have a good ear; none but they understand music." In a few days he set out for Greece, leading with him, says Dio Cassius, such multitudes, as might have easily reduced the Parthians, and all the nations of the East, had they not, like their general, been destitute of all courage, and armed only with harps, fiddles, masks, buskins, and other theatrical implements. With this army he embarked, and landing at Cassiope, immediately began to sing before the altar of Jupiter Cassius. Thence he advanced into the heart of Greece, playing, singing, and acting in all the cities, through which he passed. But in the following year, Capito and Rufus being consuls, he chiefly exerted his skill at the Olympic games, where, to the eternal ignominy of the Roman name, the head of the empire was not ashamed to appear, as a competitor, among the common harpers, players, and charioteers. He won the prize of music, by corrupting, as was commonly believed, either the judges, or his competitors. The prize of chariot-driving he evidently forfeited; for having attempted to drive with ten horses, he was thrown off, and so hurt, that though he remounted, yet he was constrained to desist, before he had finished the career. However, as he insisted upon the judges excluding all casual events and misfortunes, they decreed him the prize, to his inexpressible satisfaction (O).

After

(O) When the games were over, Nero not only rewarded the judges with the rights of Roman citizens, and rich presents, but restored the whole province of Achaia to its ancient liberty, taking upon himself the office of crier, and solemnly proclaiming the freedom of the Achæans at Corinth on

the day of the Isthmian games: so that from this time the Greeks continued free from all kind of taxes, impositions, and tributes, governing themselves by their own laws, till the reign of Vespasian, who revoked all the privileges and exemptions granted them by Nero, as Galba obliged the judges to refund the

vast

After this contest, he travelled all over Greece, not prompted by the commendable curiosity of visiting the antiquities of that once celebrated country, but by the paltry ambition of displaying his skill and art in singing, and playing upon the harp. He challenged every where the best performers, and never failed being declared victor; inasmuch that he is said to have gained, in this progress, above eighteen hundred prizes. He transmitted a particular account of each victory to the senate, enjoining them to acknowledge the favours of the gods towards him with victims, oblations, and public processions, and to take care that the same devotions were practised throughout the whole empire¹. That there might remain no monuments of other victors, he commanded all their statues to be pulled down, to be dragged through the streets, and to be either dashed to pieces, or thrown into the common sewers².

Sings in most of the cities of Greece.

Loaded with the crowns and prizes, he consulted the oracle at Delphi, and was warned by the pretended deity of the place, "To beware of seventy-three." Not reflecting on Galba's age, he imagined this to be the term of his life, and conceived so great assurance of his living, and enjoying an uninterrupted happiness till that age, that having soon after lost many things of great value by shipwreck, he confidently told his friends, that the very fish would bring them again; nay, he was so possessed with this notion, that two years after, when tidings were brought him of the insurrections in several provinces, he was so far from being alarmed, that he seemed rather to rejoice at those disturbances, since they furnished him with a plausible pretence of seizing the estates of the inhabitants. The Pythonefs he presented with a large sum, which Galba not long after obliged her to refund³. This year Cestius Gallus, governor of Syria, being defeated on the eighth of November by the Jews, after he had raised the siege of Jerusalem, acquainted Nero with his overthrow; who appointed Mucianus governor of Syria in his room, and advanced Flavius Vespasianus to the command of the troops in that province,

Consults the oracle of Delphi.

Vespasian sent against the Jews.

¹ Apoll. Ty. lib. v. cap. 3. Dio, lib. vi. p. 323. Pausan. in Cor.
² Suet. cap. 24. ³ Suet. cap. 40. Dio, p. 634.

vast sums, with which the and people, Nero, when he de-
chanting emperor had presented declared it free, bestowed upon
them. As the province of them in its room the island of
Achaia belonged to the senate Sardinia (1).

(1) Suet. lib. vi. cap. 22. Dio, lib. lxiii. p. 719. Pausan. in Cor.

though

though he had not long before forbid him his presence, and threatened him with destruction, for having nodded while he was singing on the stage °.

Yr of Fl.

2416.

A. D. 66.

U. C. 816.

Nero undertakes to cut through the isthmus of Corinth.

Before he left Greece, he undertook to cut the isthmus, in order to open a communication between the Ionian and Ægean seas, and by these means prevent the frequent wrecks that happened on the coast of Peloponnesus. With this view, as he was always ready to attempt what was generally deemed impossible, he assembled his prætorian guards, and encouraged them, with large promises, to undertake the work. Having solemnly prayed that the design might turn to his glory, and the advantage of the commonwealth, he ordered the trumpets to sound, and advanced at the head of his guards, singing and dancing, to the place where the work was to begin. There, with a golden pick-ax, which the governor of the province presented, he pretended to set an example to others; but being tired after three strokes, he carried away in a basket the handful of earth he had moved, and posted to Corinth, as proud as if he had undergone the labours of Hercules. He ordered the prisoners from all parts to be transported into Greece, and to be condemned only to this work. But either the insurmountable difficulties that occurred, or the troubles which began to break out, or were apprehended about this time, obliged Nero to drop the enterprize, though he was with such ardour and eagerness determined upon the execution of it, that he would rather have renounced the harp for ever, than seen his favourite project thus defeated P.

Drops that enterprize.

He plunders Greece.

As he wanted money to supply his prodigality, and defray his exorbitant expences, he plundered first the province of Achaia, putting, under various pretences, such of the Greeks to death as were thought wealthy, and seizing their estates. From Achaia he extended his rapine to Italy and Rome, where all the riches of the known world centered. He had taken with him into Achaia such of the senatorial and equestrian order as were considerable for their birth, virtue, or fortunes, with a design to dispatch them at a distance from Rome, and consequently with more safety and less noise; so that tidings were daily brought to the city of the death of some of her most illustrious citizens, and orders to Helius, a freedman of the emperor Claudius, whom he had appointed governor of Rome, to seize their estates; for this year Nero issued an edict, declaring, contrary to

° Joseph. Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 40. Tacit. Ann. lib. xvi. cap. 31.
P Suet. cap. 31. Lucian. Nero, p. 143.

the custom which had hitherto obtained, the estates confiscated even of those who anticipated their sentence by a voluntary death.

Of the many great men who suffered this year, none was more generally lamented than the brave Domitius Corbulo. He was equal, says Tacitus, in courage, prudence, and experience, to the most renowned commanders of ancient Rome, and at the same time a true pattern of the modesty, virtue, and integrity of the primitive citizens. He was adored for his unbounded generosity, beneficence, and goodness, even by the most inveterate enemies of the Roman name, who would readily have submitted to Rome, had Rome been governed by a Corbulo. Nero, well acquainted with his good qualities, honour, and integrity, reposed in him an entire confidence, and invested him with an unlimited power in the East, where he performed those exploits which we have described in the history of Armenia. Though he commanded a powerful army, entirely at his devotion, was by all judged the most worthy of the sovereign power, and might have easily seized it, as he was equally admired by Romans and foreigners of every rank and condition; yet he never entertained the least thought of raising himself to the empire. This inviolable fidelity to so cruel a tyrant, so worthless a prince, was the only circumstance which either Romans or foreigners ever blamed in his character. To this Tiridates alluded, when, speaking of him to Nero, he told the emperor, that in Corbulo he had an excellent slave. This year Nero, having resolved to destroy Corbulo, whom he hated for his virtue and great abilities, wrote a letter to him, filled with the most tender expressions of friendship, and invited him into Greece, pretending an eager desire to see one to whom he was so highly indebted. Corbulo, judging of the emperor's sincerity from the uprightness of his own heart, immediately departed for Greece: but Nero, the instant he was informed of his arrival at Cenchreæ, the port of Corinth on the side of the Ægæan Sea, dispatched orders for his immediate execution; which were no sooner communicated to the brave general, than, drawing his sword, he plunged it into his breast, saying, that he well deserved to die; no doubt, on account of his credulity, and inviolable attachment to so vile a monster^a. Such was the end of the greatest commander, and the best man, in the whole Roman empire (Q).

The character of Corbulo.

His death.

In

^a Dio, p. 690.

(Q) He was beloved by the emperor, says Dio Cassius, for his unshaken fidelity; but hated for his virtue, of all crimes the greatest.

*Annæus
Cornutus
banished.*

In the same year, Annæus Cornutus, one of the most learned men in Rome, was banished to a desert island, for no other crime but the study of philosophy, and profession of virtue (R). Nero, upon his leaving Rome, had committed

greatest. He left behind him an account of his wars, and other transactions in the East, which are frequently quoted by Pliny, but have not reached our times (1).

(R) The famous poets Lucan and Persius had been his disciples; for he took great pleasure in instructing the Roman youth in the principles of the philosophy of the Stoics, which he himself professed. Persius had a great veneration and esteem for him; whence he left him by his last will (for he died in the ninth year of Nero's reign) seven hundred volumes, and a considerable sum of money, which last he restored to the heirs of the deceased, being satisfied with the books. He is said to have advised Persius's mother to suppress some poetical compositions, which her son had written in his youth (2). Dio Cassius tells us (3), that Nero, having an inclination to write the Roman history in verse, from the foundation of the city to his own time (for he had some genius for poetry), and being told, that he could not comprise it in fewer than four hundred books, consulted Cornutus upon that subject, who answered, that the number of books was too great, and that no one would read them. This Nero did not resent, believing

Cornutus only meant, that no one would read them on account of their number. But one urging, that the books of Chrysippus were more numerous, and yet generally read; "The books of Chrysippus (replied Cornutus), contain many useful precepts, which serve to improve both our manners and understanding." This answer provoked Nero to such a degree, that he was for having him immediately put to death; but several of Cornutus's friends and disciples interposing in his behalf, he was only banished. Aulus Gellius quotes certain comments upon Virgil, written by Annæus Cornutus, whom he styles an illustrious and learned grammarian (4); and likewise his second book upon the figures of rhetoric (5). Macrobius too speaks of Annæus Cornutus, as a man well skilled in the Greek tongue. The treatise of the theology of the Greeks, which has reached our times, and passes under the name of Phornutus, is, by Theodoret and others, ascribed to Cornutus. From this work Porphyrius pretends that Origen learnt to explain the Scripture by allegories (6). It is certain, that Origen often makes use of the writings of Cornutus, to prove the tenets of the Christian religion (7); but whether this be

(1) Vide Voss. Hist. Lat. lib. i. cap. 25. & Noris, de Cenotaph. Pisan. p. 334. Ven. 1681. (2) Dio, p. 715. Pers. Vit. p. 495.

(3) Dio, lib. lxii. p. 715. (4) Aul. Gell. lib. ii. cap. 6. (5) Idem. lib. ix. cap. 10. (6) Euseb. lib. vi. cap. 19. (7) Vide Hier.

sp. 84.

mitted the government of the city, as we have hinted before, to Helius, investing him with an absolute power over all persons, senators not excepted, whom he was authorised to banish, condemn, and execute, without even acquainting the emperor with the crimes laid to their charge, or waiting for his consent. Helius, assisted by Polycletus, another freedman, made the same dreadful havock of the Roman nobility at Rome, as his master did in Achaia. Virtue, quality, or wealth, were unpardonable crimes, and punished with death. Few noble families escaped the cruelty of the emperor, or the imperial freedman. The latter, more cruel, if possible, than Nero himself, cut off the nearest relations, and even the children of those he condemned; executions which incensed the city to such a degree, that a general insurrection was apprehended. In this emergency, Helius dispatched messenger after messenger to the emperor, representing to him the state of affairs, and pressing him to return to the capital with all possible expedition. As Nero delayed his departure from day to day, and returned no other answer to Helius, than that if he truly loved him, he could not envy him the glory he was daily acquiring in Greece, but would rather wish that Nero might return worthy of himself; the freedman left Rome unexpectedly, and arriving in seven days in Greece, so alarmed the emperor with the exaggerated account he gave him of the general discontent that reigned in the city, that he immediately embarked for Italy. In his passage, his fleet was dispersed by a violent storm, the ships, laden with all the wealth of Greece, were cast away, and he himself was in imminent danger of being lost with them. With much difficulty he escaped, and, upon his landing, caused many of his numerous retinue to be inhumanly massacred, for having imprudently betrayed an appearance of joy, while he was in danger of perishing^r.

Cruelties exercised in Rome by Helius the freedman.

Nero returns to Italy.

He entered Naples through a breach in the wall, according to the custom of the victors in the Olympic games, and

His entry into Naples, Rome, &c.

^r Dio, p. 723. Suet. cap. 23.

the Annæus Cornutus who was banished by Nero, is much questioned by the critics (8). Suidas likewise mentions a philosopher, named Cornutus, and born at Leptis in Libya, who, according to him, came to

Rome before the reign of Nero, and wrote several philosophical tracts. This we take to be the Annæus Cornutus mentioned by Dio Cassius; but Suidas is mistaken, in supposing him to have been put to death by Nero.

(8) Vide Voss, Hist. Lat. lib. ii. cap. 26.

in

in the same manner marched into Antium, Albanum, and Rome. He made his entry into the latter city in the triumphal chariot of Augustus, pompously attired, having with him, in the same chariot, another player upon the harp named Diodorus, wearing an Olympic crown on his head, and carrying a Pythic crown in his hand. Before him marched in great pomp, and richly dressed, eighteen hundred persons, each with a diadem in his hand, and under it an inscription, signifying where it had been won, the name of the person whom the emperor had overcome, the subject and title of the song, and such kind of important circumstances. His chariot was followed by the whole rabble of the city, exclaiming in derision, that they were the soldiers of Augustus, and claimed a share in the glory of the triumphant victor. From the Viva Sacra, the procession turned to the circus, which Nero entered through a breach, having caused one of the arches to be thrown down. Thence they proceeded by the Velabrum, and the forum, to the palace, and from the palace to the temple of Apollo, where he displayed all his crowns, and ordered them to be carried from thence to his golden house, and there hung up round his bed, upon the many statues which he had erected to himself, in the habit and attire of a harper (S). Either this

(S) The remaining part of this year he spent in playing upon the harp, singing and acting upon the stage, not one of the nobility daring to be absent upon any pretence, from his theatrical representations, though they often lasted, not only the whole day, but the night. We are told, that he personated, with great art, Canace in labour, Orestes murdering his mother, Œdipus pulling out his own eyes, and Hercules frantic; in which last representation a raw soldier, then upon guard, seeing the emperor bound in chains, as the argument required, and supposing it real violence, ran in, sword in hand, to his relief, and cleared the stage, a circumstance which did not a little divert the weary multitude. While

he was acting in a tragedy, the battoon happening to fall out of his hand, he betrayed such concern and fear of forfeiting the reputation of an able actor, that he could not pursue his part, till one of his fellow-actors assured him upon oath, that not one of the audience had taken the least notice of so small a fault, which was merely casual. To preserve his voice, he used to lie constantly on his back, with a thin plate of lead upon his stomach, took frequently vomits and purging potions, and abstaining from all sorts of fruit, and meats reputed prejudicial to his voice: nay, he gave over at length, through fear of hurting his voice, making speeches to the soldiery or senate, contenting himself with signifying his pleasure to them in

this or the preceding year, a conspiracy was formed against him by Vinicius, and discovered at Beneventum; and this is all we find concerning it in the histories of those times, which are still extant.

A conspiracy discovered.

The next consuls were Silius Italicus, the celebrated poet, and Galerius Trachalus *. In the course of this year, Nero, after having long sported with the blood of the human race, and made spoil of the creation, was at length overtaken by the bloody fate which his enormous and crying iniquities deserved. His raging fury had quite exhausted the patience both of Romans and foreigners, who were equally disposed to a general revolution, and only wanted a person of consequence and experience to take the lead. The first, who had courage enough to declare his generous resolution of redeeming the world from the no less ignominious than tyrannical yoke, under which it had groaned for more than thirteen years, was Julius Vindex, descended from the ancient kings of Aquitain, and at this time governor of Celtic Gaul. He was a true lover of his country, had on several occasions signalized his courage, prudence, and experience, in the military art, bore an utter aversion to slavery, and was possessed with an ardent ambition of transmitting his name to posterity by some commendable action †. We are told, that before he openly avowed his design, he communicated it to Galba, then governor of Hispania Tarracensis, who neither countenanced nor discovered it to Nero; but several governors of other provinces, to whom Vindex had imparted it by letters, immediately forwarded them to the emperor ‡. Though Galba did not at first

Julius Vindex revolts in Gaul. His character.

* Plin. lib. iii. ep. 7. Front. Aquæduc. p. 119. Idatius, &c.
† Dio, lib. lxxiii. p. 724. Suet. cap. 40. Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 16.
‡ Plut. Vit. Galbæ.

in writing, or by the mouth of some of his friends or freedmen. After his return from Greece, he established a new employment, charging one, whom he called, with a name borrowed from the Greek tongue, his phonascus, to take care of his voice. He would never speak but in the presence of this new officer, who was first to admonish him, when he talked too loud, or strained himself; and afterwards, if the emperor,

transported with any sudden emotion, did not attend to his admonitions, to stop his mouth with a napkin. The most effectual means of courting his favour was, to commend his voice, to pretend raptures while he sung, to appear dejected, and be very importunate, if he pretended, as he sometimes did, like other singers, not to do what he was most ardently desirous of doing (1).

(1) Suet. cap. 25.

shew himself inclined to favour the revolt, yet the brave Vindex, having about the beginning of March, assembled the Gauls, harrassed and reduced to beggary, by heavy tributes and impositions, communicated to them his designs, encouraged them to concur chearfully in his measures, and in a long speech displayed their many grievances, from which he said there were no hopes of relief, so long as their tyrannical and cruel oppressor lived or reigned.

*He raises
a power-
ful army.*

His design was universally applauded by the Gauls, who immediately flocked to him from all parts; insomuch, that though he had no Roman troops under his command, yet he found himself in a short time at the head of a hundred thousand armed men. Thus strengthened, he wrote once more to Galba, exhorting him to espouse the common cause of mankind, and put himself at the head of the Gauls, who already constituted a body of a hundred thousand armed men, and could, if necessary, raise a greater force. At the same time an express arrived from the governor of Aquitain, demanding succours against Vindex. Upon the receipt of these important dispatches, Galba assembled his friends before he returned an answer to either of the messengers. In the council they were almost all of opinion, that he ought to be informed how Rome was inclined, before he declared: but Titus Vinus, tribune of the only legion in the province, starting up, "What room (said he) is here for deliberation? It is a crime even to question, whether or not we shall continue faithful to Nero, and as such it will be punished by him. There is no medium; you must either agree to the overture of Vindex, and consider Nero as your declared enemy, or march this instant against a person who had rather have Galba for emperor than Nero." This speech made a deep impression upon the mind of Galba, who was likewise animated by several favourable omens, and above all by a prediction, which was uttered about this time by a young virgin of great distinction in Spain, and agreed exactly with another, which had been delivered two hundred years before; importing, that Spain should one day give a prince to Rome, and to the world a sovereign. He therefore hesitated no longer; but appointed a certain day for the Spaniards to meet at New Carthage, now Carthagera.

*Galba re-
volts in
Spain.*

The Spaniards, informed of the revolt in Gaul, and suspecting his design, obeyed the summons with great alacrity; for they abhorred the very name of Nero, and flocked from all quarters to Carthagera, where Galba, ascending the tribunal, round which were placed the images of several illustrious persons, whom Nero had caused to be inhumanly massacred,

maffacred, openly declared his design in a fpeech addreffed to that numerous affembly; which he could not finifh, being interrupted by the loud fhouts and joyful acclamations of the multitude, faluting him with one voice, emperor and Auguftus.

Galba, declining thefe fpecious titles, declared, that he devoted himfelf to the fervice of his country, only as lieutenant to the fenate and people *. Thus proclaimed, he ordered levies to be made throughout the whole province; felected a certain number of perfons of known prudence and experience, and with them formed a kind of fenate; appointing a band of young knights, whom he called evocati, to guard the door of his chamber; and caufed edicts to be fixed up in every city of the province, inviting the inhabitants to join him, and lend what affiftance they could towards the recovery of their liberty, and the fuccels of an enterprize which fo nearly concerned their intereft. Otho, who ftill governed Lufitania, was the firft who declared for Galba, fending him all his gold and filver plate to turn into money; and likewise his domeftics, who were more accuftomed to a court, and knew better than Galba's, how to ferve an emperor *.

He declines the title of emperor.

The firft tidings of the revolt of Vindex and the Gauls, came to Nero at Naples; but he was fo far from being affected with it, that he rather feemed to rejoice at the news, as affording a plaufible pretence to plunder thofe wealthy provinces; fo that he continued to fing, play, and act upon the ftage, as ufual, for eight days fucceffively, without iffuing any orders for fuppreffing the revolt, or even writing or fpeaking to any perfon on the fubject: he was only once heard to fay, upon receiving letters of a later date, exaggerating the impending danger, that he would make Vindex and the Gauls pay dear for difturbg his pleasures. At length the edicts of Vindex, filled with moft bitter inveftives, roused him fo far as to write to the fenate, recommending to the fathers the revenging of the injuries offered to him, the fathers, and the whole republic, and excufing his abfence with the pretence of an inflammation in his throat (T).

Nero is not affected with the tidings of the revolt of Vindex.

But

* Suet. in Galba, cap. 10. Dio, lib. lxiv. p. 730. Plut. in Galb.

* Suet. in Galba, cap. 10, & Plut. in Vit. Oth.

(T) He repented nothing fo much as Vindex's calling him, in one of his edicts, an unskilful harper, and Ahenobarbus inftead of Nero. He declared, that he would quit his adopted name, and refume that of his family, fince they reproached him with it, as a name to be afhamed of. The other imputation affected him.

But the alarm increasing, and messengers arriving with disagreeable accounts, he at length left Naples in great dismay, and repaired to Rome. However, his fear was much abated by observing on the road a tomb, on which was engraved a Gaul overcome by a Roman knight, who dragged him on the ground by the hair. This frivolous presage so revived him, that he returned thanks to the gods for such an auspicious omen. Upon his arrival in the city, instead of assembling the senate or people, he only summoned some of the principal men to his palace; and, after a short consultation, in which no resolution was taken, he wasted the rest of the day in shewing his counsellors certain musical instruments lately invented by himself, and so contrived as to play by water. Here, entirely forgetful of the danger that threatened him, he discoursed of the nature and workmanship of each, promising to produce them upon the stage, "provided Vindex would give him leave."

*Complains
of Vindex.*

*Is alarmed
at the re-
volt of
Galba.*

However, he wrote to the senate, complaining of Vindex, set a price upon his head, recalled the troops that were on their march towards Albania, and ordered the legions in Illyricum to be immediately transported into Italy (U). He seemed to despise Vindex, and to be under no apprehension of the Gauls; but intelligence being brought of the revolt of Galba, just as he was going to supper, he was so struck with it, that he remained a long time motionless, without being able to utter a single word. When he recovered, he overturned in a violent rage the table, tore his garments, broke in pieces two cups of great value, and, dashing his head against the wall, cried out, he was undone; his misfortunes were without example; his empire was seized, while he was still alive, and become the prey of an usurper. However, he could not, even in the height of his consternation and fear, refrain from his usual

him still more; he could not bear it; but in the transports of his passion broke out into bitter invectives against Vindex, abusing him as one entirely ignorant of an art, which he had with his own industry, and indefatigable pains, refined and brought to the greatest perfection: to refute this calumny, he played more frequently than ever, observing with great attention the countenances of the spectators, and asking them whether they

had ever heard or known a more skilful player upon the harp than himself.

(U) We are told, that when news were brought to Vindex, that Nero had promised ten millions of sesterces to any one who should bring him his head, he answered with great calmness, "Whoever brings Nero's head to me shall, if he pleases, have mine in exchange."

debaucheries; but pursued his former course of life, feasting, revelling, and, upon receiving news from the provinces that seemed the least favourable to his affairs, jesting and ridiculing the heads of the rebellion. He even appeared in the theatre; and because one of the actors performed his part so as to deserve extraordinary applause, he reprimanded him for invading the rights of the emperor. In the mean time the senate, through fear and flattery, declared Galba a traitor, and an enemy to his country. In consequence of this sentence, Nero immediately seized his estate, and commanded it to be put up to auction; a circumstance which Galba no sooner understood, than he in his turn exposed to sale Nero's estate in Spain, and found a great number of purchasers.

This insult enraged Nero to such a degree, that in the first transports of his fury, he resolved to send persons into all the provinces, to murder the governors and commanders of the armies, on pretence of their being privy to the conspiracy; to order all the exiles to be massacred, lest they should join the revolvers; to cut the throats of the Gauls in Rome, as accomplices and favourers of their countrymen; to poison the whole senate at an entertainment; to set fire to the city, and at the same time let loose the wild beasts kept for the public spectacles, that the people being diverted from extinguishing the flames, their destruction, and the destruction of the city, might be the more inevitable. But dropping, upon farther consideration, these barbarous designs, not out of remorse, but despair of effecting them, he resolved to march in person against the rebels; and deposing the two consuls, Silius and Trachalus, entered alone upon the consulship, pretending an ancient prediction, importing, that when Rome had but one consul, by him the Gauls should be overcome. Having therefore assumed the fasces, and other marks of the consular dignity, he ordered levies to be made throughout Italy, named the officers who were to command under him, and caused a great number of waggons to be got ready for conveying with safety, not the engines of war, but his musical instruments, and the decorations of the stage; for he was so dastardly as to declare to his intimate friends, that he did not intend to try his fortune with the rebels in the field, but upon his arrival in the province, to present himself without arms before the armies, to weep, and with sighs and tears beg forgiveness of his former conduct; which if, touched with compassion,

His desperate resolution.

Deposes both the consuls.

His meanness.

1 Suet. lib. vi. cap. 42. cap. 2.

2 Plut. Vit. Galb. Plin. lib. xxxvii.

they should grant him, he designed to engage and fix their affections, by diverting them with plays and songs of triumph, which, he said, it was high time for him to begin to compose.

*Rufus
Virginus
marches a-
gainst Vin-
dex.*

In the mean time Galba's party daily gained new strength, all the governors of the provinces declaring for him, except Clodius Macer, who commanded in Africa, and L. Rufus Verginius, or Virginus, governor of Upper Germany, where he had under his command some of the best legions in the whole empire. The latter even marched against Vindex with all his forces, and being joined by the inhabitants of Treves, the capital of Belgic Gaul, and powerfully assisted in Celtic Gaul by the cities of Langres and Lyons, advanced as far as the city of Besançon, which he besieged. Upon this intelligence, Vindex marched to the relief of the place; but upon his arrival Virginus desiring an interview with him, the two generals had a private conference, in which they agreed to act against Nero; but Virginus could not be prevailed upon to declare for Galba. After a long consultation, Vindex returned to his troops, and with them advanced to Besançon, in order to take possession of the place, pursuant to the private agreement of the two chiefs. Virginus's men, believing that Vindex designed to attack them, marched out without their general's orders, attacked the Gauls, who were altogether unprepared for an engagement, and with great slaughter put them to flight (W).

*Vindex de-
feated.*

*Lays vio-
lent hands
on himself.*

Vindex after the battle destroyed himself, and after his death the victorious legions defaced the images of Nero, and importuned Virginus to accept the empire, saluting him, "Cæsar, Emperor, and Augustus." Virginus was descended of an equestrian family; and had on many occasions signalized his prudence, valour, equity, and the virtues and endowments requisite in a brave commander, or an excellent citizen*. Dio Cassius assures us, that he might have easily seized on the empire, had he but seconded the ardent wishes of the troops under his command. But either out of a great-

* Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 52. Dio, p. 726. Plin. lib. ii. ep. 1.

(W) Thus Dio Cassius (1); but Plutarch tells us, that the two armies engaged in defiance of the orders of their commanders, who did all that lay in their power to divert them

from that wild resolution (2). Be that as it may, it is agreed on all hands, that the two armies engaged, and that twenty thousand Gauls were killed upon the spot.

(1) Dio, lib. lxxiii. p. 725.

(2) Plut. Vit. Galb.

masters of soul truly heroic, or a lively apprehension of the evil consequences which would inevitably accrue from allowing the soldiery to choose an emperor, he not only rejected their offer, but resolutely declared, that he would neither take upon himself the sovereign power, nor suffer any one else to assume it, who was not appointed by the senate, to whom alone the disposal of the empire belonged. The same answer he returned to the soldiery, when upon the news of Nero's death they again importuned him to accept of the empire^b.

*Virginus
refuses the
empire.*

The death of Vindex, and declaration of Virginus, not to suffer any one to assume the sovereignty without the consent of the senate, exceedingly perplexed Galba. Besides, it was reported, that the legions commanded by Virginus, finding they could not persuade their general to accept of the empire, threatened to return to Nero; while some of Galba's own troops, repenting of the new oath they had taken, attempted to abandon him; and certain slaves, whom one of Nero's freedmen had presented him with, formed a conspiracy, and would in all likelihood have dispatched him, had they not discovered themselves by exhorting one another, as Galba was passing through a narrow street to his baths, not to let slip so favourable an opportunity. The new emperor, therefore, in the utmost consternation, wrote to Virginus, earnestly soliciting him to act in concert with him against Nero, the common enemy of mankind, and to give his assistance to the great work of restoring Rome to her ancient liberty. We are ignorant what answer Virginus returned; but it seems to have been unfavourable to his design, since he retired a few days after with his friends to a city in Spain called Clunia, quite disheartened, repenting of what he had done, and ready to lay violent hands on himself^c. The levies commanded to be raised at Rome by Nero went on but slowly; for though he summoned all the tribes to take the military oath, yet no one appeared fit to bear arms; inasmuch that he was obliged to issue an edict, ordering all masters to furnish a certain number of slaves, whom he enfranchised and listed among his troops. He likewise obliged persons of every rank and profession to contribute the greatest part of their yearly income towards the intended expedition, according as they were rated in the books of the censors.

*The bad
situation
of Galba's
affairs.*

These heavy impositions, together with his foolish and unseasonable delicacy (for he would receive no money but what was new coined), incensed the people so highly, that

*Nero pro-
vokes the
people at
Rome.*

^b Plut. Vit. Galb.

^c Suet. cap. 10.

*Is alarmed
at the re-
volt of the
German
legions.*

they openly opposed the collectors, telling them, that the best and most ready means of supplying the prince with money, was to oblige the informers to refund the immense sums they had earned by their infamous practices^d. As a famine began to be felt in the city, the fury of the populace was heightened by the arrival of a ship from Egypt, at that time the granary of Rome, not laden with corn, as was expected, but with sand for the gladiators and wrestlers. Upon this occasion, the people rose in a tumultuous manner, overturned in the night most of the emperor's statues, broke his images, plundered the houses of his friends and favourites, and committed innumerable disorders, no one offering to appease or restrain them. At the same time news arrived of the revolt of the legions in Germany, which so affected Nero, that he inclosed poison in a golden box, and went immediately into the Servilian gardens, whence he dispatched the freedmen, in whom he chiefly confided, to Ostia, to assemble his fleet, being resolved to sail to Egypt, whither he had already sent some German troops. However, before he left the palace, he sounded the tribunes and centurions of his guards, asking them whether they were disposed to accompany him in his flight? But some of them evading, others positively refusing to attend him, and one of them crying out, "Ufque adeone mori miserum est? Is it so dreadful a thing to die?" he was quite distracted and confounded in his thoughts; resolving at one time to fly to the Parthians, at another to address Galba as a suppliant, to appear in public clad in deep mourning, and with all possible humility and dejection implore the forgiveness of the people for his former conduct; and, if he found them inflexible, to beseech the government of Egypt. To this purpose an oration was found after his death among the rest of his papers; but he was deterred from delivering it by an apprehension of being torn in pieces by the outrageous multitude before he could reach the rostra.

*Is betrayed
by Nym-
phidius, and
abandoned
by his
guards.*

He therefore put off taking any resolution till the next day. In the mean time, his ruin was completed by one whom he least suspected, Nymphidius Sabinus, who, though of a mean descent, had been by Nero, upon the death of Fenus Rufus, appointed colleague of Tigellinus in the command of the prætorian guards, and now entertained thoughts of seizing the sovereignty for himself. However, he did not immediately declare his ambitious views; but pretending to espouse the cause of Galba, assured the guards, that Nero was fled, and promised them such sums as neither

^d Suet. cap. 44

Galba nor any other was able to discharge. This promise secured for the present the empire to Galba, occasioned afterwards the loss of it, and, finally, produced the destruction of Nymphidius and the guards themselves: for the soldiery, thus deceived, and tempted by the promises of Nymphidius, abandoned Nero, notwithstanding their long and sworn fealty to the house of the Cæsars, and proclaimed Galba emperor; even Tigellinus, the chief author of the crimes that rendered Nero's name so odious and detestable, forsook and betrayed him in this extremity. The emperor, altogether unacquainted with the treasonable practices of Tigellinus, awaked about midnight; when understanding, to his unspeakable surprize, that his guards were retired, he leaped out of bed, sent in great haste for his friends, and none of them obeying the summons, went at last in person, attended by a few domestics, to their several houses; but finding the doors every-where shut, and no one deigning even to return an answer to his prayers and entreaties, he hastily returned to his chamber, which he found rifled, and stripped of all the furniture. The golden box, in which he kept the poison, prepared by the infamous Locusta, being likewise carried off, he sent for Spicillus, a celebrated gladiator, to dispatch him; but neither he, nor any other being found to undertake that task, he exclaimed, in a fit of despair, "What! have I in this forlorn condition neither friends nor enemies?" Which words he had scarce uttered, when he hurried out with a design to throw himself into the Tiber; but he suddenly stopped, and wished for some private place to recollect himself, and resume his courage.

*His fright
and con-
sternation.*

*Flies from
Rome.*

Hereupon Phaon, one of his freedmen, offered him his country-house, situated between the Salarian and Numentan roads, about four miles from the city. He accepted the offer, and, without farther delay, attended only by four persons, of whom Sporus was one, left Rome, meanly apparelled and worse mounted, concealing his face through fear of being discovered. Upon his setting out, he was terrified and dismayed by dreadful flashes of lightning, and a violent earthquake, as if the ghosts of the many persons he had murdered were rising up, says Dio, against the unmerciful tyrant. As he passed the camp of the prætorian guards, he heard them cursing him, and wishing prosperity and success to Galba. A passenger, whom he met on the road, perceiving him and his attendants, "These (said he), are no doubt in pursuit of Nero," another asked him, "What news of Nero in the city?" His horse starting at the sight of a carcase that lay in the way, the covering of his face was shaken off, and he was known by a soldier of

the prætorian guards, named Missicius, who saluted him with the title of emperor. This salutation so alarmed Nero and his attendants, that at the first turning they quitted their horses, and betaking themselves to a narrow path, crept with much difficulty through bushes and briars to the wall which inclosed Phaon's grounds, who intreated the emperor to conceal himself in a sand-pit, till he should find means to introduce him with more secrecy: but Nero answered, that he would not be buried till he was dead; and lay concealed among the briars, while Phaon examined the wall, to see if he could be admitted undiscovered.

His forlorn condition,

In the mean time Nero, pressed with thirst, took water out of a ditch with his hands, saying, "To this liquor is Nero reduced:" he likewise cleared with his own hands his garments of the briars that had stuck to them. In order to procure a more private access to the house, a hole was opened in the wall, through which he was dragged, and conveyed into a room very indifferently furnished, where he passed the remainder of the night, and part of the following day, in such agonies as can hardly be expressed, alarmed at the least noise he heard, apprehensive that assassins were come to murder him, and not daring to speak through fear of being discovered. He now repented of the many crimes he had committed, wished he had pursued a virtuous conduct, was sensible that those who had advised the measures he had followed were his greatest enemies, and had constantly in his mouth the following words, taken out of a tragedy, intitled *Cædipus Banished*, the last in which he had acted: "My father, mother, and wife doom me to destruction." As those who attended him were constantly solliciting and importuning him to prevent, by a voluntary death, the dangers that threatened him, he at last ordered his grave to be dug, and wood and water to be provided for washing and burning his body, lamenting while he gave these orders in a manner altogether unmanly, and often repeating, with many sighs and tears, "What an artist will the world lose!"

Is declared by the senate an enemy to the state, and condemned to die.

The news of Nero's flight filled the city with joy; the senate assembled early in the morning, and proclaimed Galba emperor; and, having taken the usual oaths to the new sovereign, declared Nero an enemy to the state, and doomed him to be punished more *majorum*. One of Phaon's friends immediately dispatched a courier, acquainting him with the transactions of the senate. As soon as the messenger appeared, Nero snatched the letter out of his

^c Suet. cap. 48. Dio, p. 627.

^f Suet. cap. 49.

hand ; and finding that he was declared an enemy to the state, and doomed to be punished more majorum, he asked, what kind of punishment that was. He was informed that, pursuant to the sentence of the senate, he was to be stripped naked, his head to be fastened in a pillory, and he in that posture to be whipped to death ; a description which so terrified him, that he snatched up two daggers, which he always carried about with him, seemingly determined to anticipate in that instant the execution of so cruel a sentence by a voluntary death ; but after trying their points with a trembling hand, he sheathed them again, saying, that his fatal hour was not yet come : then turning to Sporus, he desired him to begin his complaints and lamentations, since the fatal moment approached. He betrayed such cowardice as to intreat, with many tears, that some of his attendants would, by their example, encourage him to die with resolution and intrepidity. But none shewing the least inclination to animate him at the expence of their own lives, he strove to raise his drooping spirits with the following words : “ Courage, Nero, courage ! such pusillanimity in an emperor is base and dishonourable ; the pains of death are but short and momentary ; strike boldly.”

*Betrays
great
meanings.*

Thus he continued animating himself, but to no effect ; till hearing the noise of some horsemen sent by the senate to seize him, and bring him alive to Rome, he exclaimed, in a Greek verse,

A dismal noise of horses strikes my ears ;

and, drawing a dagger, put it to his throat ; but his courage failing him, he besought Epaphroditus, his freed-man and secretary, to give him his assistance. He complied with great reluctance, and paid dear for it, being afterwards put to death by Domitian for imbruing his hands in the blood of the Cæsars. Before he was entirely dead, the centurion sent by the senate to apprehend him, entered the room ; and pretending he was come to his relief, endeavoured to stop the blood : Nero gave him no other answer than, “ It is too late : is this your fidelity and allegiance ?” With which words he expired, his eyes staring in a frightful manner, to the great amazement of the spectators *. Upon the first rumour of his death, one of Galba’s freed-men, not trusting to common report, repaired to the place where his body lay ; and having beheld the lifeless carcase extended on the ground, all covered with gore, hastened

Yr. of Fl.
2417.
A. D. 67.
U. C. 817.

His death.

* Sueton. cap. 49.

*The joy of
the Roman
people.*

to Spain with the important tidings ^h. Many others, prompted by the like curiosity, flocked to Phaon's country-house. His death being no longer questioned, the joy of the Roman people was so great and universal, that they paraded the streets with such caps on their heads, as were worn by manumitted slaves, congratulating one another upon their deliverance from so hard a bondage, overturned and dashed in pieces most of Nero's statues, and killed as many of his friends as fell into their hands. Such was the miserable end of Nero, the sixth emperor of Rome, who by his unparalleled iniquities, deserved the misfortunes which befel him. He died in the thirty-first year of his age, having reigned thirteen years and about eight months. We need not enlarge on his character, since the name of Nero is by most nations made use of emphatically to express a barbarous, furious, and abandoned tyrant. Pliny calls him the common enemy and fury of mankind ⁱ, and most writers exhibit him as the pattern of a merciless tyrant; and indeed his whole life seems to have been a constant struggle, to shew how abandonedly wicked, how execrably bad a human creature can be, when vested with great power. The only thing he earnestly commended to his attendants before he died was, that his head might not be cut off, but his body burnt entire. His request was readily granted by Icelus, one of Galba's freedmen, who likewise allowed his obsequies to be performed with the usual solemnity.

*His ashes
deposited in
the monu-
ment of the
Domitian
family.*

His ashes were carefully deposited in the stately monument of the Domitian family by his concubine Acte, and two other women, who, in his infancy, had been charged with the care of his education. He was not an eloquent speaker, Seneca having diverted him, if Suetonius is to be credited, from perusing the works of the ancient orators, lest he should despise his style and compositions. He had a genius for poetry, and wrote verses with great ease: some indeed accused him of plagiarism; but from this imputation Suetonius clears him, assuring us, that from the tablets on which he wrote, according to the custom of those times, and which our author narrowly examined, it evidently appeared, that the verses were neither transcribed by him, nor dictated by another, being effaced, interlined, and corrected, as thoughts or expressions occurred to him, which he liked better ^k. Though he died generally hated and abhorred, yet the vulgar, abandoned to debauchery, and corrupted by the idle amusements of the theatre and

^h Plut. Vit. Galb.
cap. 50—52.

ⁱ Plin. lib. vii. cap. 8.

^k Sueton.

circus, began soon to regret the loss of a prince, by whose infamous vices they subsisted. Hence they flocked to his tomb, adorned it with flowers, and carried his images, in a sort of triumph. Vologeses likewise, king of the Parthians, shewed a particular respect for Nero after his death, and by the ambassadors, whom he sent to the senate to renew his alliance with the Roman people, earnestly begged, that the memory of Nero might be revered, and a monument erected to him. Some even pretended, that he was not dead, but would soon appear again, and take vengeance of his enemies: edicts were publicly hung up, said to be issued by him; and soon after a slave, who greatly resembled him, and was no less skilled in singing and playing upon the harp, attempted to impose upon the provinces of Asia and Achæia for the deceased prince; but was seized and executed in the island of Cythrus¹.

The populace regret his loss.

Several counterfeits Neros appeared afterwards; one especially in the reign of the emperor Domitian, near twenty years after the true Nero was dead, created great disturbances in the East, where he was followed by vast crowds. Artabanus, who then reigned in Parthia, espoused his cause, and sent him powerful succours; but was at length prevailed upon to abandon the impostor, and deliver him up to the Romans^m. The family of the Cæsars, properly speaking, ended in Caligula, who had been adopted by Tiberius; but nevertheless, as Nero was descended from Augustus by his mother Agrippina, the house of the Cæsars is said to have ended in this emperor (X).

Several counterfeits Neros.

CHAP.

¹ Dio, lib. lxi. p. 734.
lib. i. cap. 2.

^m Sueton. cap. 57. Tacit. Hist.

(X) The reign of Nero was distinguished by several writers of eminence. Fabius Rusticus wrote the history of his own time, and is frequently quoted by Tacitus; though, in the opinion of that impartial writer, he betrayed too much zeal in extolling Seneca, to whose friendship he was chiefly indebted for the plentiful fortune he possessed. A. Persius Flaccus acquired great fame by his Satires. He was of an equestrian family, allied to the most illustrious families in Rome. He was born in Vo-

laterræ, a city of Hetruria. At the age of sixteen he studied philosophy, together with Lucan, under Annæus Cornutus, the famous Stoic. He was a man of a mild temper, of an unblemished character, of extraordinary modesty, and unbounded beneficence. The subject of his satires are the faults of the orators and poets of his time, whom he exposes with great humour and elegance, without sparing Nero himself. Cæsius Bassus died about the latter end of Nero's reign, and left

C H A P. LIII.

From the Death of Nero to the Death of Vitiellius, when the Empire became hereditary a second Time.

The ancestors of Galba.

Servius Sulpitius Galba, the seventh emperor, was, by his father, descended by the Sulpitian family; one of the most ancient and illustrious in Rome. Sulpitius Galba governed Spain, in quality of prætor, and was the chief cause

left behind him several poetical pieces highly esteemed. He excelled in lyrics; but fell far short of Horace (1). Lucan was put to death by Nero's orders. His chief performance is his *Pharsalia*, wherein he describes the war between Cæsar and Pompey, in the opinion of Quintilian, more like an orator than a poet (2). A Greek woman, named Pamphyla, gained great reputation under Nero, by a general history, which she comprised in thirty-three books, well known to the ancients, but not transmitted to modern times (3). Andromachus, a native of Crete, by profession a physician, inscribed to Nero a Greek poem on treacle, preserved among the works of Galen (4).

But of all the writers who flourished under Nero, the most renowned, without dispute, is the philosopher L. Annæus Seneca. He applied himself first to the study of eloquence under his father, and afterwards embraced, with great ardour, the philosophy of the Stoics, hav-

ing for his instructors Attalus, Sotion, and others. By his first wife, whose name has not been transmitted to us, he had a son named Marcus. To his second wife he took Pompeia Paulina, probably the daughter of Pompeius Paulinus, who, in the first year of Nero's reign, commanded in Lower Germany. Though Seneca professed a philosophical life, he has been accused of many things altogether unworthy of that profession. Dio Cassius charges him with many abominable practices, and even with having taught his pupil Nero those unnatural crimes, which will render his name infamous to the latest posterity (5). Nevertheless, that writer does not betray the least prejudice against him; but, on the contrary, bestows frequently high elogiums upon him. Though he often declaimed, with great zeal, against riches, yet, in the space of four years, partly by the favour of the prince, partly by excessive usury, and hunting after testaments and inheritances, he

(1) Plin. lib. xiv. cap. 4.

Hist. Græc. lib. ii. cap. 7.

(5) Dio, in Excerpt. Val. p. 685.

(2) Quint. lib. x. cap. i.

(4) Idem, Poet. Græc. lib. ii. cap. 7.

(3) Voss.

cause of the war with Viriatus, the celebrated leader of the Lusitanians. He was afterwards created consul; but acquired greater renown by his eloquence than by the offices he bore, being esteemed the most eloquent orator of his time. His grandson, Sergius Galba, served with great reputation under Julius Cæsar, and distinguished himself in the Gaulish war; but afterwards, imputing the loss of the consulship to the ill offices of the dictator, he joined Brutus and Cassius, and was, on that account, condemned by the Peditan law. His son Servius Galba, was more famous for his studies than his employments; for he was not advanced above the degree of a prætor, when he published several histories, which are greatly extolled by the ancients. His son, Sergius Galba, married Mummia Achaica, the granddaughter of the celebrated Q. Lutatius Catulus Capitolinus, and great grand-daughter of L. Mummius, who took and rased Corinth. By her he had two sons, Caius and Servius Sulpitius Galba the emperor. Caius, having in his youth squandered away his estate, led a retired life in the country, till the twenty-second year of Tiberius's reign; when, upon receiving a letter from that prince, forbidding him to draw his lot for a province, he laid violent hands on himself. The present emperor was born on the twenty-fourth of December, in the fifth year before the common Christian æra. His mother, Mummia Achaica, dying while he was an infant, his father soon after took to his second wife Livia Ocellina, a lady of great quality and wealth. She adopted young Galba, who thereupon assumed the name of L. Livius Ocella; which, however, he seems to have retained but a short time (Y). He was well versed in all the liberal sciences, especially in the civil law. He mar-

His birth.

amassed an immense treasure. To his usury, and iniquitous extortions, Dio Cassius chiefly ascribes the revolt of the Britons. Tacitus, who speaks of him as favourably as he thought consistent with truth, owns, that he courted popular esteem, and was greedy of applause (6); and both Suetonius and Quintilian tells us, that he decried the eloquence of the ancient orators, that his own might be the more esteemed. His style has been decried both by ancient and modern critics: but after

all, his works deserve the highest esteem, for the refined morals they contain and inculcate; and every reader will find in them powerful motives to embrace, and excellent rules to pursue, a virtuous life.

(Y) We are told by Suetonius, that while he was one day amongst other noble youths of his own age saluting Augustus, the emperor laying his hand upon his head, "And you too, my son, (said he), shall one day taste of empire."

(6) *Annal. lib. xiii. cap. 11.*

His education, marriage, &c.

ried Lepida, descended of an illustrious family; but she, and the two sons he had by her, dying, he led ever after a single life, notwithstanding the solicitations of Agrippina the mother of Nero, become a widow by the death of Domitius. She had conceived a great passion for him while his wife was living; which occasioned a quarrel between her and the mother of Lepida, who publicly upbraided her with her scandalous conduct ^a.

His preferments.

He was, by the interest of Livia, preferred to employments before the age required by the laws. During his prætorship, he diverted the people, at the sports called Floralia; with elephants walking upon the rope. When his prætorship was expired, he was appointed governor of Aquitain, and about a year after raised to the consulship, in which office he succeeded L. Domitius, the father of Nero, and was succeeded by Salvius Otho, the father of Otho, who was his successor in the empire. Caligula named him to the command of the legions in Germany, in the room of Getulicus; which trust he discharged with great reputation, having, in a short time, restored the ancient discipline, which his predecessor had entirely neglected. Besides, he repulsed, with great bravery, the Germans, who had made an inroad into Gaul; an exploit which gained him the favour and esteem of Caligula. Upon the death of that emperor, he was earnestly solicited, by many persons of great interest and power, to seize the empire for himself; but he, without hearkening to their proposals, obliged his troops to take the usual oaths to Claudius, who thereupon received him into the number of his most intimate friends, and ever after shewed so great an esteem for him, that being upon the point of setting out on his expedition into Britain, he postponed his journey for some days, on account of a slight indisposition which seized Galba. Some time after, Africa being much harassed with intestine troubles, and the invasions of the neighbouring Barbarians, he was, without drawing lots, according to custom, sent into that province in quality of proconsul, and distinguished himself even above those who had gained the greatest reputation in that government. He remained there two years, during which time he restored, with great prudence, and necessary severity, the province to its former tranquility. Upon his return from Africa, he was honoured with the triumphal ornaments, and admitted among the Titian priests, and the priests of Augustus. From this time, to the middle of Nero's reign, he led a retired life, fearful of giving the ty-

^a Sueton. in Galb. cap. 5.

rant umbrage. During his retirement he never stirred out, even to take the air, without a cart containing a vast sum of money, that he might not be reduced to want, in case he should have found it necessary to consult his safety by a sudden flight.

Thus he lived, till Nero, without solicitation, named him to the government of Hispania Tarraconensis. He governed that province eight years, at first with excessive rigour, of which authors give us several instances: however, by degrees he abated of his severity, through fear of giving Nero occasion of jealousy, and abandoned himself, contrary to his inclination, to sloth and idleness, saying, that no man could be called to account for doing nothing*. Nevertheless, he neglected to suppress the many bitter lampoons which were handed about against Nero, and sung throughout his province, or to enquire after, or punish the authors of them. He could not check the cruelties and extortions practised by the imperial procurators, whose province it was to collect the taxes and other duties belonging to the revenue; but openly shewed a tender concern for the sufferings of the oppressed people, which gained him the hearts of the natives, but provoked the emperor's officers to such a degree, that, at their instigation, Nero had already ordered him to be privately dispatched. Before these orders could be put in execution, he openly revolted in the manner we have related†.

Is appointed by Nero governor of Hispania Tarraconensis.

We left Galba at Clunia, a city of his province, whither he had retired in the utmost consternation, upon the news of the death of Vindex, and the declaration of Virginius, not to seize the empire himself, nor suffer any one else to assume it, who was not chosen by the senate. While he was deliberating with his friends what measures to take, and in the utmost despair, ready to kill himself, his freedman Viciellius arrived in seven days from Rome: understanding, upon his arrival, that Galba was reposing in his chamber, he opened the door, and entering in spite of his guards, acquainted him, that Nero was dead; and that he (Galba) was declared emperor, by the army, senate, and people. This intelligence flew immediately through the neighbouring cities, and drew vast crowds to Clunia: Galba received them in the most condescending manner, and communicated to them the news he had received. Two days after, Titus Vinius, tribune of the only legion then in the province, having received from his friends in Rome a distinct account of what had passed in the capital, left the camp, and im-

Galba receives the news of Nero's death.

* Suet. cap. 6—9.

† Dio, lib. lxiii. p. 725.

parted

parted it to his general. Nor was it long before messengers arrived from the consuls Silius and Trachalus, who, though deposed by Nero, had, upon his death, resumed the fasces, with the decrees of the senate, declaring Galba emperor, and vesting him with the sovereign power ¹.

*He sets out
for Rome.*

He no sooner received the decrees of the senate than he left Spain and set out for Rome, attended by his Spanish guard, by his chief friends, and by Otho, proprætor of Lusitania, the first governor who had declared for him; but advanced slowly, being, on account of his age, carried the whole way in a litter. The only person whom Galba seemed to dread and suspect, was Virginius Rufus, who was at the head of a powerful army in Germany; had acquired great reputation by the defeat of Vindex, and was greatly beloved by the soldiery: but he, though earnestly pressed to assume the sovereignty, not only by the troops under his command, but likewise by deputies from the legions, which, by Nero's orders, had crossed over from Illyricum into Italy, continued firm to his first resolution of reserving to the senate the power of electing an emperor; and, when certain news were brought him of Nero's death, he still persisted in refusing the title of emperor, though his soldiers bound themselves by a solemn oath to support him to the last extremity; and one of the tribunes, forcing his way into his tent, with his drawn sword, threatened to kill him on the spot, if he continued to withstand the ardent wishes of the whole army.

*Obliges his
legions to
acknowledge
Galba.*

When he received from Rome a certain account of the resolutions of the senate, he immediately took the oath of fidelity to the new emperor, and persuaded, not without much difficulty, the troops under his command to abandon all thoughts of raising him to the empire, which by the senate had been decreed to another. Galba was so pleased with his loyal and generous conduct, that he immediately sent for him, with a design to have him near his person, and confer upon him such rewards as his fidelity deserved. Virginius received with the utmost respect Flaccus Hordeonius, who was appointed to command in his room, resigned the army to him, and set out, without delay, to meet the emperor, who already approached the frontiers of Gaul. Upon his arrival, he was received very coldly by Galba, without the least token, says Plutarch, of affection or hatred, of gratitude or resentment. The emperor had a personal value and esteem for him, and would have raised him, had he followed his own inclination, to the chief em-

*Is received
coldly by
Galba.*

¹ Plut. Vit. Galb.

ployments in the state : but Titus Vinius, who had already gained a great ascendancy over Galba, and was jealous of Virginius, did every thing in his power to estrange from him the mind of the emperor, and to put a stop to his promotion. Galba, upon his arrival at Narbonne, received the ambassadors sent to him from the senate in a most obliging manner, and invited them to an entertainment, at which he refused to make use of the silver and gold plate which belonged to Nero, contenting himself with his own ; a circumstance which shewed that he utterly despised all pomp and outward appearances of grandeur. However, he was soon persuaded by Vinius to alter his conduct in this particular, and put upon other measures, which hastened his ruin (Z).

Nymphidius Sabinus, of whom we have spoken in the preceding reign, having, by his immense largesses, gained the affections of the prætorian guards, and persuading himself that Galba, by reason of his infirmities and old age, would never reach the capital, usurped all the authority at Rome. Presuming upon his interest, he obliged Tigellinus, who commanded, jointly with him, the prætorian guards, to resign his commission. He made several magnificent and expensive entertainments, inviting such as had been consuls, or had commanded armies, distributed large sums among the people, and with shews and other diversions, which he daily exhibited, gained so great an interest with all ranks, that he already looked upon himself as sovereign. The senate, dreading his power, conferred extraordinary honours upon him, styled him their protector, attended him when he appeared in public, and had recourse to him for the confirmation of their decrees, as if he had been already invested with the sovereign power. This base compliance

Nymphidius Sabinus aspires to the empire.

(Z) He treated with the utmost severity some cities of Spain and Gaul that had been backward in acknowledging him, published threatening edicts against them, and deprived them of great part of their territories, loading them with heavy taxes, and causing their walls to be pulled down (7). In Gaul he ordered Vettius Chilo, and in Spain Obultronius Sabinus, and

Cornelius Marcellus, to be put to death, and with them, if we believe Suetonius (8), even their wives and children, for having refused to join him, when he first revolted from Nero. As Galba was known to be a man of a humane temper, and naturally averse to all manner of cruelty, these executions were generally imputed to Vinius, and his other favourites.

(7) Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 53.

(8) Sueton. cap. 23.

*His power
in Rome.*

elated him to such a degree, that he usurped, not leisurely and by degrees, but all at once, an absolute authority.

*Attempts to
stir up the
prætorian
guards to
a revolt.*

Though he acted as sovereign, he had not yet openly declared his design of seizing the empire; but when he understood that Galba was already in Gaul, and approached the borders of Italy, that Cornelius Laco and Titus Vinus were appointed commanders of the prætorian guards, he summoned the officers under his command; and, after having bitterly inveighed against Galba's favourites, who, he said, would exercise the same power and authority which had been usurped by Tigellinus, if they were allowed time to establish themselves, he exhorted them to send ambassadors to the emperor, and require, in the name of the whole army, that he would discharge from his service Laco and Vinus. If Galba complied with their request, he did not doubt but the whole power would devolve upon him, since he had contributed more than any other to the ruin of Nero and promotion of Galba; and this power he designed to make use of against Galba himself: if the emperor rejected the petition of the army, his refusal, he hoped, would estrange their minds from him, and dispose them to a revolt. The officers did not approve of the motion; on the contrary, they thought it absurd and unreasonable to direct an emperor of Galba's years and experience, and tell him who of his friends were to be trusted, and who discharged. Nymphidius, therefore, changed his measures; and, contrary to the advice of Clodius Celsus, a native of Antioch, his intimate friend, resolved no longer to conceal his design. Accordingly he imparted it, without disguise, to some of the officers, and they to the soldiers under their command; it was also agreed, that Nymphidius should be conveyed that night into the camp, and there proclaimed emperor: but Antonius Honoratus, one of the tribunes, touched with remorse, assembled his men in the evening, renounced the confederacy, and encouraged them to continue steady in their allegiance to Galba. The discourse of the tribune brought all who heard him over to his sentiments; so that they resolved to maintain inviolably the oath which they had taken to Galba. Most of the other cohorts joined them; and, with loud shouts, again proclaimed Galba emperor.

*He goes to
the camp.*

Nymphidius hearing the noise, and either imagining they proclaimed him, or fearing some insurrection, hastened to the camp, by torch-light, and holding a speech in his hand composed by Ciconius Varro, which he intended to pronounce to the army. Upon his arrival at the camp, he found the gates shut, and the soldiers under arms on the ramparts.

ramparts. These circumstances greatly alarmed him ; but nevertheless advancing nearer, he asked them, what they designed, and by whose orders they had taken arms ? To this question they answered with one voice, " We are determined to acknowledge no other emperor than Galba." Nymphidius, pretending to concur in their sentiments, commended their fidelity ; and not yet despairing of being able by large promises to gain them over to his interest, ordered them to open the gates to their general. They obeyed ; but Nymphidius, upon his first entering the camp, was saluted with a dart, which Septimius, who marched before him, received on his shield. The traitor immediately fled ; but being closely pursued by the soldiery, was overtaken and slain. His body was dragged through the camp, and next morning exposed to public view in an inclosure made for that purpose *. Galba being at the same time informed of the treason, and the punishment inflicted on the traitor, dispatched orders to the senate, enjoining them to put all his accomplices to death without distinction. This command was considered as murdering so many innocent people, as they were executed without being heard in their own defence. Every one expected, from a man of Galba's years and experience, a quite different conduct ; and therefore the whole city was greatly alarmed at such illegal and arbitrary proceedings †. But what occasioned a greater surprise, was his ordering Petronius Turpilianus, who had been consul in the eighth year of Nero's reign, to be put to death, for no other crime than being faithful to that prince, and acting as general under him. From these hasty and illegal executions, it was generally concluded, that the new prince would not observe that moderation in his actions which he had promised in his speeches.

After a long and fatiguing march, Galba at length reached the Milvian bridge, within twenty-five furlongs of the city, and was there met by a numerous body of marines, who by Nero had been formed into a legion, and were come to address the new emperor for a confirmation of their establishment. Galba either rejecting their petition, or putting off the affair to another time, they grew mutinous, surrounded the emperor, stopping up the way to all others who came to wait upon him, and, with a tumultuous noise, required an eagle and legionary ensigns. Galba, provoked by their insolence, ordered his horse to ride in among them, who put many to the sword, and the rest to flight. The emperor, not satisfied with this severity, commanded

Is there murdered.

His accomplices punished by Galba's orders.

Galba's unseasonable severity.

* Plut. in Vit. Galb.

† Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 5.

*Is governed
by his fa-
vourites.*

*Their scan-
dalous con-
duct.*

*Galba calls
to an ac-
count, and
punishes the
ministers of
Nero.*

those who had escaped to be decimated; so that, according to Tacitus, several thousands fell either by the swords of the horse, or those of the executioners[†]. But what contributed most to render him both odious and contemptible, was his suffering himself to be entirely governed, and blindly controuled, by his three favourites, Titus Vinus, Cornelius Laco, and Marcianus Icelus, who, as they lodged in the palace, and were continually about the emperor, were commonly styled his pedagogues (A). As the aged emperor reposed an entire confidence in these ministers, without ever enquiring into their conduct, they prostituted the credit and character of their master to their own sordid gain and wicked passions. By them all things were sold; offices, provinces, public revenues, public justice, and the lives of the innocent and guilty. He was old; they were insatiable, and eager to make the most of a short reign; so that in the court of Galba appeared all the evils and excesses lately seen and abhorred in that of Nero.

His first care, after his arrival in the capital, was to call to an account, and punish, according to their deserts, such as had been the instruments of the late tyrannical administration. Among these, Elius Polycletus, Petinus, Patrobius, Narcissus, all Nero's freedmen, and Locusta, the infamous poisoner, were publicly executed, to the infinite satisfaction of the people; who, with loud acclamations, followed them to the place of execution. No one doubted but Tigellinus would receive the like sentence. He had been the chief author and promoter of all Nero's iniquities,

[†] Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 6.

(A) Titus Vinus was descended of an illustrious family, but disgraced it by his infamous conduct; being, according to Tacitus, of all men the most notoriously wicked. He was a man of great boldness and address, and, according as he chose to apply his talents, capable of performing great things for the public welfare, or plunging the state in endless calamities. Cornelius Laco, the other favourite, whom Galba had appointed captain of the prætorian guards before he left Spain, was a man of slender parts, of no courage

or activity, but conceited of his own talents. Icelus was a manumitted slave, but not inferior to the other two in favour and authority. Nero had vested him, by the gold ring, with the order of knighthood, and he was on every occasion called by an equestrian name, that of Martianus. He was a man of insatiable avarice, and is said, by spoil and rapine, to have amassed more wealth in the seven months that Galba reigned, than the most rapacious freedman of Nero had done during the thirteen years of his reign.

had

had perpetrated many unknown to him, and at last forsaken and betrayed him. Hence the execution of no man was more ardently wished for, more vehemently urged, by such as hated, by such as lamented Nero; both concurring from opposite passions, in the same antipathy and request: but he had, with immense presents, purchased the favour of Vinus, who protected him, on pretence that his daughter had been saved by Tigellinus; and indeed he had saved her, says Tacitus, not from any sentiment of clemency, but purely with a view to secure the protection of her father, should a revolution happen in the state^a. Of this scandalous partiality the people loudly complained, and as often as the emperor appeared abroad, crowded about him, demanding the execution of Tigellinus. This they earnestly begged in the theatre, in the circus, and at the gates of the palace.

Tigellinus is protected by Vinus.

The people demand his execution.

As the death of this execrable instrument of Nero's tyranny was thus demanded by the universal voice of the Roman people, it would have been but just, as well as politic and popular, to sacrifice him, though he had been less guilty than he really was, to the manes of so many illustrious Romans murdered by him, and to the honest rage of the public. This measure would have obliged both the friends and enemies of Nero, gained the affections of the people, and strengthened Galba's party. But these were small considerations with Vinus, in comparison of filling his coffers: in order, therefore, to save Tigellinus, who had engaged to pay him an immense sum, if he escaped unpunished, he persuaded Galba, who reposed an entire confidence in him, not only to withstand the ardent wishes and earnest solicitations of the whole Roman people, but to check them with an edict, wherein he reproached them with cruelty, and hoped they would not make his government appear tyrannical, nor insist upon the execution of an unhappy man, who was dying of a consumption. Nothing provoked the indignation of the people so much as this edict; for it was afterwards known, that Tigellinus had that day made a sacrifice to the gods for his recovery, which was followed by a magnificent entertainment; and that Vinus, after having supped with the emperor, had spent the whole night in revelling with Tigellinus: it was moreover known, that Vinus had carried his daughter with him to the entertainment; and that Tigellinus, after having thanked the father for the edict, presented the daughter

Galba checks them with an edict.

^a Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 72. Dio, lib. lxxiv. p. 723.

first with two hundred and fifty thousand drachmas, and afterwards with a necklace, which he took from the neck of the chief of his concubines, valued at one hundred and fifty thousand more.

Halotus is likewise pardoned and preferred.

Halotus, another of Nero's ministers, and perhaps no less hated, on account of his enormous cruelties and extortions, than Tigellinus, was in the same manner, and from the same motives; protected by the authority of Vinus; and, in consideration of an immense sum, which he paid to that wicked minister, he not only escaped unpunished, but was preferred to a most honourable and profitable employment*. Thus were criminals, notoriously guilty of the most glaring iniquities, but possessed of wealth enough to purchase the favour of the reigning minister, screened from the punishment due to their crimes, while others, less guilty, were hurried to execution. This scandalous partiality gained the minister what he chiefly aimed at, immense treasures, but brought the prince infinite public hatred; for, by not restraining his minister, he incurred the same censure as if he had been personally guilty†.

All honours and employments exposed to sale.

The example of Vinus was followed by the other ministers and favourites of the new emperor; for being indulged in immoderate power, they exposed to sale all the honours and emoluments of the state. His bondmen too were eager to profit by the sudden sunshine, and to convert into hasty gains the short reign of a master already enfeebled with age. So that the people began loudly to complain: "Why (said they) was Nero deposed, if things are not mended under Galba? Why a new prince chosen, but for the ease of the state, after a reign of violence and tyranny?" The public hatred, which the numberless iniquities of the emperor's ministers derived upon him, was heightened by his ill-timed strictness, and unpopular parsimony; though his parsimony was chiefly ascribed to Vinus, who was said to have restrained the emperor's generosity to others, that he might the better gratify his own avarice. While the emperor endeavoured to reform the abuses, and retrench the exorbitant expences that had prevailed in the preceding reign, he ran into the other extreme. No man's wealth, says Tacitus, did he ever covet, but was sparing of his own, and of the public money greedy and tenacious.

His unseasonable parsimony.

As the treasury had been quite exhausted by Nero, who had consumed above seventy millions in profuse pensions

* Plut. in Vit. Galb. Sueton. cap. 15.
lib. i. cap. 4.

† Tacit. Hist.

and donations, Galba, after having examined every expedient to raise the necessary subsidies, preferred to all others, as the most just, that of supplying the public at the expence of those, for whose sake the people had been impoverished. All the partakers, therefore, in the late emperor's prodigalities, were called to account; and it was enacted, that they should retain only a tenth part, and restore the rest: but as they had scarce a tenth left unwasted, having lavished the plunder of the public, and of their fellow-citizens, in the same riot and prodigality in which they had squandered away their own private fortunes, the emperor obliged those who had bought or received anything from them, to refund the whole. For these searches and exactions, a new court was instituted, in which presided, according to Tacitus, thirty; according to Suetonius, fifty Roman knights; who extended their enquiries even into Greece, and there obliged the players upon instruments, the actors, wrestlers, charioteers, the judges at the Olympic games, and the priests of Apollo Delphicus, to restore nine-tenths of Nero's donations. As this was an inquisition without bounds, many were affected by it; and the court being new in its institution, from the multitude of officers, the numerous suits, heavy and vexatious, every part of the empire was in a ferment.

He orders nine-tenths of Nero's donations to be restored.

The soldiers of the prætorian guards were kept quiet some time, in expectation of the prodigious donative, which had been promised them by Nymphidius in Galba's name, supposing that though they might not receive the whole, yet the emperor, notwithstanding his meanness, would not scruple to bestow upon them the same present that had been given by Nero. But when he refused to fulfil the promise which had been made in his name, and ordered only a small sum, less than had yet been given by any prince, to be distributed among them, they could not refrain from seditious invectives, vilifying the emperor for his old age and avarice. This disaffection was heightened by a saying of Galba; a saying, according to Tacitus, worthy of the primitive virtue of the Romans and of the commonwealth, but dangerous at this time, that he chose his soldiers, and did not buy them. His severity too, in exacting a strict observance of military discipline, a quality so admired of old, and by the armies ever distinguished with applause, was very grievous to a slothful soldiery, scorning the ancient discipline, and, for thirteen years, so accustomed to the dissipated reign of Nero, that at this time they no less admired the vices of their princes, than of old they had

Refuses the soldiery the usual donative.

*Discharges
the German
cohort.*

adored their virtues (B). He discharged several of the prætorian guards, who had been engaged in the conspiracy of Nymphidius; and dismissed, without the usual rewards, the German cohort, which had served the Cæsars with unshaken fidelity, ordering them to return to their country, because he suspected them more inclined to Cn. Dolabella than to him. However, he took particular care of some other cohorts of Germans; who, having been sent by Nero before him to Alexandria, while he meditated a journey thither, and soon after recalled, were returned sickly, and greatly fatigued with so long a voyage.

About the same time that Julius Vindex revolted in Gaul, Clodius Macer, who governed Africa in quality of proprætor, took arms against Nero, levied new forces, and formed them into a body, which from him was called the Macrian legion, but soon after disbanded by Galba, whom he refused to acknowledge, through fear of being called to an account for the numberless murders and extortions, which his unbounded avarice and cruelty had prompted him to commit. Plutarch tells us, that without either accepting or rejecting the imperial title, he strove to maintain himself in possession of Africa, and to furnish the city, by stopping the vessels which thence conveyed corn to Rome. He was instigated to this revolt, according to Tacitus², chiefly by Galvia Crispinilla, who had been the directress of Nero's lusts, and afterwards, passing over into Africa, had insinuated herself into the favour of the proprætor Macer. According to this account, Macer seems not to have revolted till after Nero's death. Be that as it may,

¹ Plut. in Vit. Galb. Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 5. Suet. cap. 16. Dio, p. 729. ² Tacit. Hist. lib. i, cap. 7.

(B) Though the rest of his conduct did not answer his severity in keeping the soldiery to their duty, yet he performed many things worthy of a prince (1). Zonaras tells us, that he punished with the utmost severity those who had, by false accusations, occasioned the ruin of innocent persons; that he delivered up to all masters such of their slaves as had borne witness against them; and that he recalled from exile those who had been banished by Nero upon the law of majesty (2). Casaubon thinks it plainly appears from an ancient inscription, that he suppressed the tax of the quadragesima or fortieth penny, which had been first taken off, and afterwards restored by Nero (3).

(1) Suet. cap. 14. lib. ix. p. 793.

(2) Zonar. p. 190.

(3) Vid. Spanh.

he was slain at the command of Galba by Trebonius Garucianus, the imperial procurator in Africa. As for Crispinilla, she returned to Rome; and though it was notorious that she had suggested the pernicious counsel of famishing the Roman people, and for that offence capital punishment was demanded against her by the universal voice of Rome; yet, by the connivance of the prince, and the favour of his ministers (for she was both opulent and childless), she escaped unhurt, and lived in perfect impunity during the reigns of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius.

*Clodius
Macer killed in Africa;*

About the same time was assassinated Fonteius Capito, who commanded in Lower Germany, by Cornelius Aquinas and Fabias Valens, two tribunes, without waiting for the emperor's command. It was believed that Capito, however abominable his crimes, however stained with avarice, and immersed in impurities, had declined engaging in any turbulent counsels; that having rejected the solicitations of Aquinas and Valens to rebel, he was by them charged with their own ill faith and treason; and that Galba, either imposed upon, or afraid of making farther inquiry, ratified the execution. However, both these executions, that of Macer, as well as that of Capito, were ill received, this being, as Tacitus well observes, the usual fate of a prince under public hatred, that every action of his, whether good or evil, is generally disapproved, perversely construed; and contributes to his ruin. Capito was succeeded in the government of Lower Germany by Aulus Vitellius, afterwards emperor, who was raised to that post chiefly by the interest of Vinus, whose favour he had gained, by supporting the same faction in the circus. Galba, in conferring upon him that command, declared, that he did not advance him out of any regard he had for him, or opinion of his abilities, but because he believed those to be less feared who were most addicted to gluttony, and that his keen appetite might be satiated with the plenty of that province; so that his preferment was owing to the contempt, and not to the esteem of the emperor^a.

and Fonteius Capito in Lower Germany.

Vitellius governor of Lower Germany.

The following year, on the calends of January, Galba entered on his second consulship, having his favourite minister, Titus Vinus, for his colleague. He had scarce assumed the fasces, when an express arrived from Pompeius Propinquus, procurator of Belgic Gaul, informing him, that the legions of Upper Germany, in open violation of their oath and allegiance, insolently demanded another emperor, and referred the free election of one to the pleasure

*Yr. of Fl.
2419.
A. D. 69.
U. C. 819.*

The legions in Upper Germany revolt.

^a Suet. in Vitell. cap. 7.

Galba deliberates concerning the adoption of a successor.

of the senate and people of Rome. Virginus had been removed from his government; and as he had neither been restored, nor preferred to any other command or employment, but treated, in some circumstances, like a criminal, they conceived themselves to be charged as delinquents, for having offered him the empire. Hordeonius Flaccus, who had been sent to succeed him, they utterly contemned, as a man void of courage and authority, and, from his lameness and the infirmities of his age, unequal to the direction of the most orderly and peaceable army. Hence, under their present frenzy, they were farther inflamed by his impotent endeavours to restrain them. This intelligence ripened the design about which Galba had been for some time deliberating with himself, and in concert with his friends, concerning the adoption of a successor; for he imagined himself to be despised, not so much on account of his age, as for want of issue. His favourites, already at variance, and each pursuing his own private views, were divided into two factions: Vinus was for Otho; Laco and Icelus were combined together, not so much to favour the interest of any particular person, as to exclude him. As Vinus had a daughter, who was a widow, and Otho was not married, no one doubted that an alliance between them was intended: Galba, touched with concern for the commonwealth, which, he thought, was in vain rescued from Nero, were it to devolve upon Otho, the chief confidant of that prince's impure pleasures, did not, in this particular, suffer himself to be blindly guided by Vinus; but hearing him patiently, deferred the farther consideration of the affair to another time. However, from complaisance to his chief minister, he appointed him and Otho consuls for the ensuing year. Hence it was generally taken for granted, that Otho would, upon his entering the consulship, be declared Galba's successor; a supposition which caused universal joy among the soldiery, who, in general, favoured Otho, and among the courtiers of Nero, who were passionate for a prince that so much resembled their former patron. While Galba was deliberating about the choice, and deferring it from day to day, alarming intelligence was brought from Upper Germany; for the legions being summoned, according to custom, on the calends of January, to take the usual oath of fidelity to the emperor, had destroyed his images and broken his statues, openly declaring, that they would never acknowledge Galba, swore allegiance to the Roman senate and people. In consequence of this intelligence, the emperor, perplexed with anxieties, not knowing whither the fury of the revolters might tend, and not trusting to the faith of the troops in Rome,

Rome, applied what to him seemed the only remedy, and held a council for declaring a successor, to which, besides Vinus and Laco, he summoned Marius Celsus consul elect, and Ducennius Geminus governor of Rome.

On this occasion Vinus urged with great zeal the adoption of Otho, and Ducennius Geminus that of Dolabella, who was nearly related to Galba: but the emperor, preferring the welfare of the public to all other considerations, after a short speech concerning his great age, ordered Piso Licinianus to be sent for, and, to the great surprize of all, named him his successor. Piso was the son of Marcus Crassus and Scribonia, by his father descended from the celebrated Marcus Licinius Crassus, who was slain in the fatal battle of Carrhæ, and by his mother from Pompey the Great. He was at this time in the thirty-first year of his age, and universally esteemed on account of his extraordinary parts, his engaging behaviour, and singular modesty^b.

*He adopts
Piso Lici-
nianus.*

Piso returned him thanks for the extraordinary and unexpected honour conferred on him, addressing him now both as his father and emperor, with a speech full of reverence, and fraught with moderation. He betrayed no symptoms of joy, no change in his countenance, none afterwards in his behaviour, as if he had been insensible of so mighty a favour; manifest indications, says Tacitus, that he was more capable of reigning than desirous to reign. The next thing that fell under debate in the council was, where to declare the adoption, whether to the people assembled, to the senate, or to the army. The result was, to proclaim it in the camp; and thither he immediately repaired, though that day, the tenth of January, was rendered unusually terrible by heavy rains, frequent claps of thunder, and incessant lightning; circumstances which, in ancient times, would have proved sufficient ground for dissolving public assemblies, but were contemned by Galba as fortuitous and unmeaning. Upon his arrival in the camp, he declared to a full assembly of the soldiers, with the brevity becoming an emperor, that he adopted Piso, after the precedent of the deified Augustus, and according to the custom of the army. He then frankly told them, that the fourth legion, and the eighteenth, at the instigation of some few incendiaries, had departed from their duty, but would soon return to their allegiance. As no mention was made of the distributions usual on such occasions, those soldiers only who stood next to him applauded his speech, and through

*Piso's mo-
dest beha-
viour.*

*His adop-
tion de-
clared to
the sol-
diers;*

^b Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 13. Suet. in Oth. cap. 12. Plut. in Galb.

*and to the
senate.*

all the rest were observed a sullen sadness and silence, for having thus lost the donative; which custom, and their own insolent claims, had, in some degree, rendered necessary. From the camp Galba proceeded to the senate, where he spoke with the same brevity as to the soldiery. The speech which Piso made was better received.

*Otho re-
solves to
attempt
the sove-
reignty.*

In the mean time Otho, who had been the foremost to espouse the cause of Galba, and thence conceived hopes of being adopted, and named by him for his successor, enraged at his disappointment, and burning with anger against Galba, with envy towards Piso, determined to make a resolute effort, while the authority of the one was daily decaying, and that of the other not yet confirmed. Many concurring motives inspired him with this resolution. As he had consumed his fortune in a course of riot and expence, and contracted immense debts, he saw nothing in the quiet establishment of the state but despair, and founded his hopes upon public confusion alone. Besides, he looked upon his being thus postponed, as a certain proof of the displeasure and ill-will of Galba towards him; and thence thought resignation and acquiescence more dangerous than boldness and temerity. His favourite freedmen too, and his slaves, inured to licentiousness and riot, were continually displaying to their lord the alluring advantages attending the sovereign power, and representing them as his own, if he would exert his spirit and influence. The astrologers, at the same time, urged him by their predictions, confidently averring, that the stars presaged approaching revolutions, and a year of great glory to Otho. Thus stimulated, Otho, who believed these predictions to be uttered by a prophetic spirit, and the propitious warnings of the Fates, resolved to make a bold attempt, and try his fortune.

*Two com-
mon sol-
diers un-
dertake to
transfer
the empire.*

The direction of this treasonable design he committed to Onomastus, one of his freedmen, who introduced to him two proper instruments, Veturius, a soldier of the life-guards, and Barbius Proculus, tesserarius to the same band; that is, one whose office it was to receive the parole from the tribune in writing, and carry it to the tents of the soldiers. Otho, having first, in a long conversation, tried their temper and capacity, and found them to be men of great address and resolution, imparted his design, loaded them with presents, promised them ample rewards, and furnished them with large sums, to bribe and corrupt the inclinations of their comrades. Thus two common soldiers undertook to transfer the Roman empire from one prince to another; and performed it effectually. They admitted very few into the secret; the minds of the rest, already uneasy and

and wavering, they estranged from the emperor by various artifices, especially by destroying all their hopes of the dominative, which had been promised, and so often delayed. Rome was at this time filled with troops; Galba had brought with him a Spanish legion; the legion which had been raised by Nero still remained in the city; and, besides these forces, there were many from Germany, Britain, and Illyricum, which had been detached by Nero's order, and sent forwards to the Caspian Streights, for the war he meditated against the Parthians, but recalled to suppress the revolt of Vindex in Gaul. These, dreading the severity of discipline, which in this reign began to be revived, were all ready to revolt. The prætorian guards, indeed, were entirely devoted to Otho, who, they hoped, would allow the licentiousness which they had enjoyed under Nero; and some of them were so impatient to see him vested with the sovereign power, that on the fourteenth of January they were prepared, as he returned home from supping abroad, to have hurried him away, and declared him emperor; only they apprehended, that, in the dark, whoever chanced to be presented to the German or Pannonian army, might by them, who were unacquainted with the person of Otho, be saluted emperor.

The execution of the design was therefore deferred till next day, when Otho, early in the morning, went to attend the emperor, and was, according to custom, received by him with a kiss, and admitted to be present at a private sacrifice which Galba offered in the temple of Apollo. We are told, that Umbricius the soothsayer had no sooner viewed the entrails of the victim, than he informed the emperor of dismal presages, of treasonable plots just impending, and a domestic foe, all in the hearing of Otho, who, by a different construction, understood it all as propitious to himself, and a successful issue foretold of his own machinations. However, he was not a little disconcerted at the discovery, and could not help betraying some dismay and confusion; but in the mean time Onomastus, his freedman, arriving, acquainted him, that the surveyor and builders waited his coming. This was the signal settled amongst them, to intimate, that the soldiers were assembling, and the conspiracy ripe for execution. He therefore immediately withdrew, assigning as the cause of his departure, that he was about purchasing certain houses, which being old and decayed, it was necessary first to examine them. Then leaning on his freedman, he proceeded through the palace of Tiberius to the Velabrum, and from thence to the gilt pillar

Galba is warned of a treasonable plot.

pillar by the temple of Saturn, where the several highways in Italy terminated.

Otho is saluted emperor by a party of the guards;

There he was received by a party of the guards, and proclaimed emperor; but as they were not above twenty-three, though his soul was not of the same soft temper and effeminacy with his person, but, on the contrary, bold and daring, yet he was so discouraged at the smallness of their number, that he desired to retire, and drop his design. This retreat the soldiers would not suffer; but placing him in a chair, hurried him away with their drawn swords. Plutarch tells us, that he pressed them to make all the haste they could, crying out, "I am a lost man." The party that attended him was soon joined by the like number of soldiers; and these, in their progress to the camp, were followed by others, who came in by small numbers, till at last they amounted to a considerable body. Upon their arrival at the camp, Julius Martialis the tribune, who that day commanded the main-guard, suffered them to enter, either surpris'd at so daring an undertaking, or privy to the conspiracy, or else believing the camp to be generally infected, and that it was in vain to resist. Here they met with no opposition, those who were not privy to the design being encompassed by such as were; so that some out of fear, others by choice, joined the revolvers, and at last, they unanimously saluted Otho emperor and Cæsar.

and carried to the camp,

where he is by all saluted emperor.

Galba, utterly unacquainted with the revolution, was still intent upon the sacrifice, and tiring, says Tacitus, with his supplications, the guardian gods of the empire already under the sway of another chief. News were first brought him, that a senator was, by a party of the guards, hurried away to the camp, to be presented to the soldiery; and soon after word came, that Otho was the senator thus carried thither. Instantly from all parts of the city people crowded to Galba with the same tidings, each relating them his own way. Some exaggerated every circumstance; others, not laying aside, even at so desperate a juncture, their usual flattery, soothed him with a favourable detail of what they pretended to have seen. In this sudden alarm, Galba hastily summoned his friends. In a consultation held with them, it was resolved, that the temper of the cohort, then upon duty in the palace, should first of all be founded, not by Galba in person, whose authority was reserved as the last remedy upon the most dangerous emergency, but by Piso; who, having caused them to be assembled at the foot

Measures taken by Galba to suppress the revolt.

c Plut. in Galb. Sueton. in Oth. cap. 6. Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 23—28.

of the stairs of the palace, exhorted them with great eloquence and energy, to continue steady in their allegiance, displaying the vices and debaucheries of Otho; and assured them, that they should receive from Galba and him, as large a donative for preserving their fidelity as was offered them by Otho, for dipping their hands in the blood of their sovereign. When he had ended his speech, some of the cohorts deserted their posts; but the major part displayed their ensigns, and prepared their arms to defend their emperor. Celsus Marius was immediately sent to secure the troops that had been detached from the army in Illyricum, and were then posted in the Vipsanian porch. To Amulius Serenus and Domitius Sabinus, centurions of the first rank, orders were given to bring away the band of German soldiers from the court of the temple of Liberty.

Cerius Severus, Subrius Dexter, and Pompeius Longinus, the tribunes, repaired to the camp of the prætorian guards, to try whether by reason and exhortations the mutiny, then in its infancy, might not be quelled, and obedience restored. Two of these tribunes the soldiers only terrified with threats, but laid violent hands on Longinus, stripped him of his arms, and ignominiously drove him out of the camp, he being particularly obnoxious to them on account of his known fidelity and inviolable attachment to Galba. The band detached from the Illyrian army drove Celsus from amongst them with flights of darts. The second legion of marines, eager to revenge the blood of their brethren who had been massacred by Galba, on his first entry as emperor into Rome, joined, without hesitation, the prætorian bands. The German troops continued a great while wavering and irresolute, being in their bodies still feeble (for they were lately returned from Alexandria sickly and fatigued), and in their minds entirely peaceable, and rather inclined to Galba, out of gratitude for the care he was taking for the re-establishment of their health ^d.

The troops refuse to obey the officers sent to them.

Galba, in the mean time, was held in suspense between two different counsels. Vinus was of opinion, that the emperor should remain in the palace, arm his slaves in his defence, fortify the avenues, and by no means issue forth amongst men inflamed with rage. All the rest alleged the necessity of dispatch, and instant measures, before the conspiracy of a few troops, yet weak and unsupported, had gathered strength and numbers. Galba yielded to the advice of the latter, it appearing to him the most plausible. Piso, however, was dispatched to the camp, as a young man of

Galba is in suspense what to do.

^d Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 31, 32.

*Receives
false infor-
mation
from the
crowd,*

great fame and reputation, generally looked upon as an enemy to the hated minister Titus Vinius. Scarce had he left the palace, when it was reported, that Otho was slain in the camp; and soon after there appeared persons who averred, that they had been on the spot when the traitor was killed, and beheld his dead body extended on the ground. It was by many conjectured, that this rumour was first framed, and afterwards circulated, by the partisans of Otho, with no other view than to entice Galba from his retirement. Upon this occasion, not only the thoughtless vulgar broke out into loud shouts, and extravagant demonstrations of joy; but the greater part of the Roman knights and senators, now eased of their fears, and therefore void of caution and reserve, forced the gates of the palace; and rushing in, presented themselves before Galba, complaining, that the vengeance meditated by them in his behalf was now snatched out of their hands. The most cowardly were at this juncture profuse of words, and in tongue valiant and daring. No man knew the fact, and all affirmed it: so that Galba, deprived of true information, put on a breast-plate; but finding himself unable, through age and infirmities, to sustain the pressing crowd, was put into a chair. Before he left the palace, Julius Atticus, one of the guards, presented himself before the emperor, and displaying a bloody sword, declared, with a loud voice, that by his hand Otho had been slain. Galba returned no other answer, than, "Fellow-soldier, whose orders hadst thou for it?" Such was his firmness in restraining the licentious insolence of the soldiery, without being intimidated by menaces, or corrupted with the most soothing flattery.

*and from
Julius At-
ticus.*

*The zeal of
the soldiery
for Otho.*

In the mean time they had, to a man, declared for Otho in the camp; and placing him amidst the ensigns, upon that very tribunal where a little before stood the golden statue of Galba, encompassed him with banners displayed. The common soldiers denied the tribunes and centurions access to his person; nay, they cautioned him to beware of all who were in command and authority among them. First the prætorian guards, and then the legion of marines, unanimously swore allegiance to him, and with loud shouts, saluted him emperor, Cæsar, and Augustus. Otho, now confiding in his strength, inflamed them with a long speech, filled with bitter invectives against Galba and his favourites; and then ordered the common arsenal to be thrown open, whence arms were instantly snatched, without any regard to the custom of war, or the different orders and ranks of

men. Galba having left the palace, was approaching the forum, when he was overtaken by Piso, who, hearing the cries of the rebellious soldiery resounding to the city, had thought it adviseable not to proceed to the camp. At the same time, Celsus Marius, who had been sent to the Illyrian army, returned with a melancholy account. In this conjuncture, some advised Galba to retreat to the palace; others proposed seizing the Capitol; and not a few were for taking possession of the place where the people used to assemble. In this contest, as in a storm, Galba's chair was borne sometimes one way, and sometimes another, according to the different movement and fluctuation of the multitude; when, on a sudden, appeared first a party of horse, and then a body of foot, rushing furiously into the forum.

At their appearance, the standard-bearer to the cohort, which had remained with Galba, rent from his standard the figure of the emperor, and dashed it against the ground. Upon this signal, the whole cohort abandoned him, and joined the detachments from the camp. Those who carried Galba, seized with fear, flung him from his chair prostrate upon the ground, and there left him to the mercy of his enemies. His last words are differently reported, as he was hated by some, or admired by others. By several it was pretended, that he asked, in the style of a suppliant, what evil he had merited? and begged time, only for a few days, to discharge the donative which had been promised in his name; but most agree, that he bravely presented his throat to the assassins, bidding them strike resolutely, if the good of the commonwealth required his death. Of the person, who gave him the mortal blow, we have no clear account: some hold him to have been Terentius, an evocatus, or resumed veteran; others, one Lecanius; the more current tradition, in Tacitus's time was, that Camurius, a common soldier of the fifteenth legion, cut his throat with a sword. The rest hacked and mangled, in a dreadful manner, his legs and arms (for his breast was covered with armour); they were transported with a spirit so brutal and inhuman; that, even after they had cut off his head, they satiated their vengeance by disfiguring, with numberless wounds, his lifeless body. Upon Titus Vinius they next discharged their rage. Some writers tell us, that, through fear, he was quite bereft of speech; others, that with a loud voice he cried out, they had no such orders from Otho; whence they conclude, that he was privy to the conspiracy. Before the temple of Julius Cæsar, he was wounded in the knee; and presently after, by one Julius Carus, a legionary, pierced quite through the body.

Yr. of Fl.
24. 19.
A. D. 69.
U. C. 819.

Galba abandoned
by all.

He is murdered,

with Titus
Vinius.

*The fidelity
and brave-
ry of Sem-
pronius
Densus.*

Among the many persons who boasted of their inviolable faith and attachment to their sovereign, one was found who performed what he had promised. This was Sempronius Densus, centurion of a prætorian cohort, and by Galba appointed to guard the person of Piso. He had not received any particular favour of Galba; but from a principle of honour, and in compliance with the oath he had taken, he placed himself before the emperor's chair, commanding those who were advancing against him, to spare the emperor. As they still approached, he threw away the vine-branch, which he held in his hand, as the badge of his office; and drawing his sword, singly encountered them all, boldly upbraiding them as detestable parricides; inasmuch that, partly by his blows, partly by his reproaches, he drew upon himself the swords of the assassins; and though he could not save the emperor, afforded Piso, who was already wounded, an opportunity to retire. The brave centurion was killed; but Piso escaped to the temple of Vesta, where he was, by a bondman of the state, received through compassion, and concealed in his chamber. Otho, being informed of the place of his retirement, sent Sulpitius Florus, belonging to the British bands, a man lately presented by Galba with the privilege of a Roman citizen, and Statius Murcus, one of his guards, with orders to take his life. By them therefore Piso was dragged from his retreat, and butchered near the gate of the temple. His head was immediately cut off, and carried to Otho, who beheld it with unspeakable joy, thinking himself now relieved from all fear and perplexity. The bleeding heads of the emperor, and his adopted son, were stuck upon high poles, and carried amidst the banners of the military bands, close by the eagle of a legion. Many, who had not the least share in the murder either of Galba, or Piso, displayed their swords and hands all imbrued with blood, and demanded a gratuity of the new emperor (C).

Piso murdered.

*The senate
and people
flatter the
new em-
peror.*

The news of Galba's death were no sooner divulged than the senate, the Roman knights, and the people, earnestly crowded to the camp. They condemned the conduct of Galba, magnified the judgement and choice of the soldiery,

(C) Tacitus and Plutarch tell us, that above a hundred and twenty petitions of this nature, presented in one day to Otho, fell afterwards into the hands of Vitellius, who commanded search to be made after the authors, and punished them all with death, not from any tenderness for Galba, but from policy, looking upon their punishment as a proper method of securing himself against such traitors (1).

(1) Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 33—42. Plut. in Galb.

kissed the hands of Otho; and the more counterfeit their indications of zeal, the more loud were their protestations. The senate, as if they were not the same men, says Plutarch, or had other gods to swear by, took the same oath to Otho which Otho had not long before taken to Galba, and had just then violated. The new emperor received all with great demonstrations of kindness; and, at the same time, endeavoured to pacify the soldiery, who breathed nothing but menaces and ravage. They demanded, that **Manius Celsus**, consul elect, and a faithful friend to Galba, even in his last distress, should be instantly put to death. They hated him, on account of his integrity and unshaken fidelity; but what they chiefly aimed at was, to have their hands let loose to general pillage and massacre, and to destroy every worthy and able man in the Roman state. As Otho had not sufficient authority to check the fury of the licentious soldiery, he pretended great wrath against Celsus, ordered him to be put in irons, as if he reserved him for some more severe punishment; and by that artifice redeemed him from a violent death. From this moment, all things were transacted by the arbitrary will of the soldiers: by them were chosen the captains of the prætorian guards, namely, Plotius Primus, once a common soldier; with him they joined Licinius Proculus, one in high confidence with Otho, and thought to have been employed by him to promote his intrigues. To the government of Rome they advanced Flavius Sabinus, partly in deference to the judgement of Nero, in whose reign he had administered the same office, and partly from regard to his brother Vespasian. They then demanded, that the fees which they had been used to pay to their centurions, for exemption from certain military burdens, should be utterly abolished; for under this name every soldier paid an annual tribute. Hence the fourth part of a legion used to be absent at once, roaming, like vagrants, up and down the countries where they were quartered, robbing and plundering, in order to raise money, to purchase a dispensation from military toils. As most of the soldiers were corrupted by such a dangerous immunity, and reduced to beggary by the fees they paid for it, they were always ready to run into sedition, dissension, and civil wars. Otho readily granted them their request: but that he might not alienate the affections of the centurions, he undertook to pay out of his own revenue the fees for such exemptions and indulgences, when they were judged necessary; a regulation which, by his successors, was perpetuated as part of the military establishment.

Otho saves Celsus.

Suppresses the fees paid by the soldiers to their centurions.

Laco and Icelus put to death.

Otho acknowledged by the senate.

Galba's body buried.

His character.

In the close of the day, Laco, captain of the guards to Galba, was seized, and soon after by Otho banished to an island, where he was murdered by a veteran whom the emperor had sent before him for that purpose. Icelus, as he was only a manumised slave, was publicly executed. The day, thus spent in tragical iniquities, was concluded with public rejoicings. Next day, the city prætor assembled the senate, when to Otho were decreed the tribunitial authority, the title of Augustus, and all the honours enjoyed by other emperors. From the senate the new emperor was carried in a kind of triumph across the forum, still flowing with blood, and over heaps of dead bodies, to the Capitol, and thence to the palace, where he granted leave to burn and bury the slain. The remains of Piso were, by his wife Verania, and his brother Scribonianus, committed to the grave, as were those of Titus Vinus by his daughter Crispina, after they had discovered and redeemed, at a great price, their heads, which their murderers had retained, in order to sell them to their relations. The body of Galba, after it had lain long in the streets, and suffered, during the licentiousness of the night, insults without number, was by Argius, one of his principal bondmen, bearing the office of steward, privately interred in his own gardens. His head, miserably mangled, was stuck upon a pole by the rabble attending the camp, and set up before the tomb of Patrobius, a freedman of Nero, whom Galba had caused to be executed. Here it was found the day following, and deposited with the remains of his body ^f.

Such was the end of Galba, after he had lived seventy-two years, and twenty-three days; and reigned, from the time he declared against Nero, nine months and thirteen days; but from that prince's death, only seven months and seven days. He had passed through the reigns of five emperors, much happier under the sovereignty of other princes than in his own. He possessed but moderate talents, and was, according to Tacitus, rather free from vices than endowed with many virtues. He had commanded, with great reputation, in the German wars; afterwards governed Africa, as proconsul, with moderation and gentleness; and, in the latter part of his life, ruled with the same equity and justice the Hither Spain. He would, to use the expression of the historian, in the opinion of all men, have passed as one capable of the empire, had he never been emperor; not that his being advanced to that high station effected any alteration in him, but because he suffered

^f Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 47, 48. Plut. in Galb. Suet. cap. 20.

himself to be governed by his freedmen and ministers; men who were continually prostituting the credit and character of their master to their own vile purposes.

Otho, now honoured by the senate with the title of Cæsar and Augustus, assumed the consulship, having for his colleague his brother Salvius Titianus; but resigned the fasces on the first of March to Virginius Rufus, as his brother did to Poppæus Vopiscus. The new emperor had scarce taken possession of the sovereignty, when he was alarmed with intelligence concerning Vitellius; tidings, which, before the murder of Galba, had been suppressed, with a design to have it believed, that only the army in Upper Germany had revolted. Vitellius had been by Galba preferred to the command of the legions in Lower Germany, to which he had repaired about the beginning of December in the preceding year. He with great care visited the winter-quarters of the legions; restored numbers to their ranks who had been degraded; many he rescued from ignominious punishments; and cancelled the marks of ignominy inflicted upon others. Having by these means gained the affections of the soldiery, Fabius Valens, who commanded a legion under him, and was highly disgusted with Galba, who, he thought, had not rewarded him according to his merit, solicited his new general to assume the sovereignty, magnifying the zeal and ardour of the soldiery, by whom he was no less beloved than Galba was hated. By these insinuations Vitellius was excited to covet the sovereignty, rather than to hope he should ever attain it. In Upper Germany, Alienus Cæcina, who commanded a legion, had entirely captivated the affections of the soldiers by his graceful person and engaging behaviour. He exercised the office of quæstor in the province of Spain called Bætica, when Galba revolted, whom he immediately joined, and was thence by him preferred to the command of a legion: but Galba, having soon after discovered, that he had embezzled the public treasure, ordered him to be prosecuted. Cæcina resenting this severity, used all his endeavours to induce the troops to revolt, hoping, by an universal confusion, to escape the punishment due to his crime. Neither in the army itself were there wanting seeds of tumult and discord; for the officers had all been engaged in the war against Vindex; nor could they be induced to acknowledge Galba till after Nero was slain. Hence a report was maliciously raised among them, and readily believed, that the legions were to be decimated, and the centurions, for the most part, cashiered. The cities of Treves and Langres, which lay contiguous to the winter-quarters

Vitellius is excited to take upon him the sovereignty by Valens.

The troops in Upper Germany inclined to a revolt.

*Refuse the
oath to
Galba.*

of the legions, and had been by Galba deprived of **great** part of their territories, were more inflamed against **him** than the legions themselves; and therefore assured them **by** their deputies, that they were ready to join them, as **soon** as they declared against Galba. On the first of **January**, when the legions were, according to custom, to swear **al-**legiance to the emperor, they refused the oath, tore **the** images of Galba, and declared that they acknowledged **no** other sovereign but the senate and people of Rome; **not** one tribune or commander daring to exert himself in **behalf** of the emperor, or offering to harangue the multitude **from** a tribunal. It is true, Hordeonius Flaccus, commander **in** chief, was upon the spot; but had not courage to restrain such as were already rushing into rebellion, to recover **such** as were only wavering, or even to rouse and animate those who still continued steady and faithful to Galba. Four centurions, namely, Nonius Receptus, Donatus Valens, Romilius Marcellus, and Calpurnius Repentinus, belonging to the eighteenth legion, would have protected the images of Galba, but were by the furious multitude seized, and secured in chains. None of them shewed the least regard to their duty, or their former oaths: but it happened in this as in other insurrections, whither the greater part led the rest blindly followed. Next night, the eagle-bearer of the fourth legion hastening to Cologne, where Vitellius then resided, acquainted him with what had passed, and exhorted him to seize the present opportunity. Messengers were by Vitellius quickly dispatched to acquaint the troops under his command, that the army in Upper Germany had revolted from Galba; so that they must either make war upon the revolters, or, if they preferred peace and tranquility, join with them, and create an emperor: at the same time, he desired them to consider, that, with much less danger, they might elect a prince at once, than continue in search of a sovereign. The winter-quarters of the first legion lay nearest, and with it Fabius Valens, who entering Cologne the very next day, accompanied with the cavalry of his legion, and a body of auxiliaries, saluted Vitellius emperor, and led him in triumph through the principal and most frequented streets of the town. His example was immediately followed with great ardour by all the legions of the same province. The army in Upper Germany no sooner heard that Vitellius had been saluted emperor by the troops under his command, than relinquishing the plausible names of the senate and people of Rome, they acceded to the party of Vitellius. The zeal of the inhabitants of Cologne, Treves, and Langres, was equal to that of the legions; they all offered,

*Vitellius
proclaimed
emperor.*

*The zeal of
the people
in his be-
half.*

fered, with great spirit, supplies of men, horses, and money, each according to the measure of his power and sufficiency. Neither was such liberality confined to the leading men of those colonies; the common people too signalized their zeal for Vitellius, in surrendering, instead of money, of which they were destitute, their girdles, the trappings of their horses, and the silver ornaments upon their armour; not doubting but they should, in future, be amply rewarded for their seasonable generosity; for, while Vitellius was giving away his own fortune, and lavishing in bounties that of others, without measure or discernment, they bestowed upon this extravagance, the title of liberality and goodness.

Vitellius, trusting to his strength, and the zeal of the soldiery, began to act as sovereign, and disposed of several employments, which had hitherto been administered by the imperial freedmen, but were by him conferred upon Roman knights. At the same time, to gain the affections of the soldiery, he ordered the fees exacted from them by the centurions, for exemptions from duty, to be paid out of his own treasure as emperor. He could not help humouring, in many instances, the revengeful temper of the soldiers, demanding particular executions: however, in some instances, he defeated it, under colour of committing the obnoxious persons to prison. Pompeius Propinquus, governor of Belgic Gaul, who had acquainted Galba with the commotions begun in Germany, was immediately put to death; but Julius Burdo, commander of the naval forces in Germany, was, by Vitellius's order, secured in prison, and afterwards discharged, when the rage of the soldiery began to abate. They suspected that he had first enticed Fonteius Capito to revolt, and then betrayed him; hence against him chiefly the fury of the army raged: but Vitellius, who had a particular value for him, saved him by deceiving them; and indeed there were no other means of shewing mercy. Crispinus, the centurion, by whom Ponteijs Capito had been slain, was publicly executed, and with him Nonius, Donatus, Romilius, and Calpurnius, the four centurions lately mentioned; men condemned for adhering to their faith and duty; a crime ever thought most heinous by such as have renounced both.

He begins to exercise the sovereign power.

Upon the news of the revolt of the armies in Germany, Valerius Asiaticus, governor of Belgic Gaul, declared for Vitellius: his example was followed by Junius Blæsus, go-

Several governors declare for him.

^e Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 56, 57. Plut. in Galb. Suet. in Vit. cap. 8.

^h Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 57—59.

*Orders his
troops to
march to
Italy.*

vernor of Gallia Lugdunensis, or that part of Gaul which took its name from the city of Lyons, and by an Italian Legion and a body of horse quartered at Lyons. The forces in Rhætia, and those in Britain went likewise, without hesitation, over to his side. Vitellius, now become, by the accession of so many armies, formidable both in forces and treasure, appointed two generals to conduct the war, and to each assigned a different route. To Fabius Valens he gave orders to cross Gaul, and in his march endeavour to gain over the natives to his party; but if he could not prevail upon them to join, to over-run and pillage their country, and then make an irruption into Italy, by that part of the Alps which was called Cottian, and is now known by the name of Mount Cenis. Cæcina was ordered to advance thither by a nearer way, and to pass over the mountains called Penini, now the Great St. Bernard. Valens had under his command the flower of the army of Lower Germany, to the number of forty thousand fighting men. From Upper Germany Cæcina led thirty thousand. Vitellius was to follow, with a numerous body of German troops, to support the whole weight of the war. While the soldiers were urgent for action, and eager to begin their march, notwithstanding the rigour of the winter season, the general passed his time in voluptuous sloth, in revels, and banquets. By the middle of the day he was always intoxicated with wine, and so gorged with feasting, that he was not capable of giving any directions: but such was the zeal and ardour of the soldiers, that they supplied all the duties of the leader as effectually as if he had attended in person. As soon as they were drawn out and armed, they demanded with eagerness that the signal might be given for marching.

*The march
of Valens
through
Gaul.*

*Slaughter
of the in-
nocent in-
habitants
of Divi-
dorum.*

They advanced with assurance to the territories of Treves, as to those of a friendly state. But at Dividurum, now Metz, they were seized with a sudden panic, ran to their arms, and would have put the inhabitants to the sword without the least provocation, had not their general restrained their fury, and by entreaties prevailed upon them to forbear pursuing the utter destruction of the unoffending city. There were slaughtered, however, not for the sake of pillage or spoil, but from fury and madness, near four thousand persons. The rest of Gaul was so alarmed with the news of this massacre, that thenceforward, as the army approached any city, the inhabitants crowded out to meet them, accompanied with their magistrates, in the attire of suppliants, and readily supplied them with all manner of provisions. In the capital of the Leucians, that is, in the city of Toul, Fabius received news of the murder of Galba,

and

and that the sovereignty was devolved upon Otho. These tidings did not affect the soldiers, for they were only intent upon war. The Gauls bore equal hatred to Otho and Vitellius; but as they were possessed with dread of the latter, they declared for him. From Toul the army advanced to Langres, a city entirely attached to the party of Vitellius, where they were kindly received. The inhabitants of Autun supplied them out of fear (for they hated Vitellius) with money, arms, and provisions. What the city of Langres had done from fear, that of Lyons did through joy; for Galba had loaded the former with taxes, deprived them of part of their territories, and converted to his own use the revenues of their state (D).

From Lyons the army was led slowly through the territories of the Allobroges and Vocontii; the general, upon every halt that he made, making infamous bargains with the proprietors of the several lands, and the magistrates of the several cities, for favour and exemptions. He ordered Lucus, a municipal town of the Vocontii, to be set on fire, because they shewed some reluctance to pay the sum he had required. Marching in this manner, Valens arrived at length at the Alps. Tacitus observes, that he had been long very poor; but by this march became suddenly rich, and abandoned himself, as his appetites had been whetted by a long course of penury, to all manner of riot and excesses¹.

He arrives at the Alps.

On the other hand Cæcina rioted in greater spoil, and more blood. The Helvetians, not apprised of the tragical end of Galba, refused to own the sovereignty of Vitellius. In consequence of this refusal Cæcina, who longed passionately for a pretence to plunder their country, instantly decamped, and entering their territories in a hostile manner, ravaged their fields, sacked their cities, and made a dreadful havock of the unhappy inhabitants; many thousands were cut off, and great numbers made prisoners and sold for slaves; for the Helvetians, once renowned for their

Cæcina commits great devastations in the country of the Helvetii.

¹ Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 60—67.

(D) As animosities had been long subsisting between the people of Lyons and those of Vienne, Valens, at the instigation of the former, marched against the latter, under pretence that they had aided the conspiracy and attempts of Vindex, and had lately levied troops for the

support of Galba. The people of Vienne gained over Valens with an immense sum, and a donative to the soldiery of three hundred sesterces a man: they were commanded, however, to surrender the arms belonging to the state, and to supply the soldiers with provisions.

valour

valour and experience in war, were at this time only famous for the reputation which they had formerly acquired: they were fierce and daring, says our historian, while danger was at a distance, but struck with terror when it arrived. As the army, after having committed universal ravage and spoil, was marching in order of battle to Aventicum, the metropolis of the country, deputies from thence were dispatched to offer a surrender of the city, which was accepted. Julius Alpinus, a leading man among the Helvetians, was, by Cæcina's order, put to death; the fate of the rest was referred to the judgement of Vitellius, who, moved with the tears and intreaties of Claudius Cossus, their deputy, a man of great eloquence and address, granted a general pardon and security^k. While Cæcina was waiting in the country of the Helvetians, till he had learnt the pleasure of Vitellius, and preparing at the same time to pass the Alps, he received joyful intelligence from Italy, that the squadron of horse named Syllana, then encamped on the banks of the Po, had declared for Vitellius. They had served under him in Africa, when he was proconsul there; had been recalled from thence by Nero, in order to be sent forward into Egypt; and, upon the insurrection of Vindex, detained in Italy. As the officers were unacquainted with Otho, and engaged by obligations to Vitellius, they easily prevailed upon their men, by magnifying the great strength of the approaching legions, and the renown of the German armies, to join the same party, and swear fealty to Vitellius. With themselves, as a present to their new prince, they brought into his interest the strongest municipal cities beyond the Po, namely, Milan, Novara, Jurea, and Vercelli. As such an extensive country could not be guarded by a single band of cavalry, Cæcina, who had this information directly from themselves, dispatched thither the several cohorts of Gauls, Lusitanians, and Britons, with a body of German troops, and the squadron of horse, called Taurina. As for himself, he was some time in doubt whether it was not advisable to bend his march over the mountains of Rhætia towards Noricum, against Petronius, governor of that province, who having on all sides raised forces, and broken down the bridges over the rivers, was suspected to act for Otho: but fearing he might lose the detachments already sent forward, and reflecting, that wherever the decisive battle should be fought, Noricum would certainly fall to the victor, he ordered his soldiers,

A squadron of horse revolts to Vitellius, and brings over several cities to the same party.

^k Tacit. lib. i. cap. 68, 69.

Lightly armed, to take their route over the Apennine, and conducted himself the heavy body of legionaries over the Alps, still covered with snow¹.

He passes the Alps.

The arrival of these troops in Italy filled Rome with consternation. Not only the senate and equestrian order, who had a share in the administration, and some concern for the public welfare, but even the populace, loudly complained, that two men, the most infamous for effeminacy, profusion, and debauchery, were thus fatally chosen, on purpose to destroy the empire. They thought their vows for either would be alike detestable, their supplications alike impious, since such men they both were, that which of the two proved the conqueror, would thence prove the worst. In the mean time Otho, though hitherto entirely abandoned to his pleasures, was not at this juncture lulled asleep by them; but suspending his voluptuous sallies, and artfully dissembling his passion for luxury, conducted all things suitably to the dignity of the empire. In order to gain the affections of the people, who suspected his virtues to be feigned, and apprehended a return of his vices, he caused Celsus Marius, consul elect, to be brought before him in the Capitol. He had already rescued him, as we have related before, from the cruelty of the soldiers, under colour of committing him to prison; and now he aimed at obtaining the character of tenderness and clemency, by mercy shewn to a man so illustrious, so beloved by the Roman people, and so odious to all the partisans of Otho's cause.

Rome in great consternation.

Otho strives to gain the affections of the people.

Celsus, when he appeared, confessed, without betraying the least fear, the imputed crime of having persevered steadily in his allegiance to Galba; he even appealed to Otho, whether he ought not to approve such an example of fidelity. Otho commended his steadiness, and, in a very condescending manner, desired him rather to forget his confinement than remember his release: neither did he treat him as a criminal pardoned, but instantly admitted him amongst his most intimate friends, and presently after chose him one of his generals for conducting the war. The saving the life of Celsus caused an universal joy amongst men of rank, was applauded with loud acclamations by the populace, and not ill received even by the soldiers, who now admired in him the same virtue against which they had, in the height of their fury, been so much incensed^m.

Pardons Celsus Marius.

¹ Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 70.
Dio, lib. lxxiv. p. 731.

^m Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 71.

*Tigellinus
ordered to
destroy him-
self.*

The public joy for the deliverance of Cæsus was greatly heightened by the fate of Tigellinus: he had been the chief author of all the enormities committed by Nero, whom he had afterwards betrayed and abandoned; and was therefore abhorred by those who loved and those who hated Nero. While Galba reigned, he was protected by the power and authority of Titus Vinus; hence the people were the more inflamed against him, their old detestation of Tigellinus concurring with their recent hatred to Vinus. From every quarter of the city multitudes now flocked to the forum and the palace, and filled the circus and the several theatres, demanding, with bold and seditious threats, the execution of Tigellinus, till at length the fatal injunction to die was dispatched to him, then at the baths of Sinuessæ. There, amidst harlots, after many passionate embraces and unmanly delays, he at last cut his throat with a razor^a.

*Correspond-
ence be-
tween Otho
and Vitel-
lius.*

While the forces of Vitellius were on their march to Italy, Otho, by frequent messengers, and private letters, strove to divert his competitor from engaging in a war which might prove fatal to both. He offered him immense sums, and such a place of retirement as he himself should choose to live in, agreeable to his profuse life and taste; he even engaged to share the empire with him, and to marry his daughter. With the same or the like offers Vitellius tempted Otho; so that they soon proceeded to reproaches, upbraiding each other with their debaucheries and profligate lives; nor in this did either bring a false charge against the other. Otho, having recalled the ambassadors sent by Galba to the armies in Germany, dispatched others in the plausible name of the senate; but the ambassadors continued with Vitellius. Vitellius obliged the prætorian guards, who, by the appointment of Otho, accompanied them, to return back, without suffering them to mix with his legionaries. At the same time Valens transmitted letters to the prætorian bands, and city-cohorts, in the name of the German army, exhorting them to abandon Otho, and his interest. He likewise upbraided them for transferring the sovereignty to Otho, when it had been so long before conferred upon Vitellius. The German army continuing faithful to Vitellius, notwithstanding the great promises of Otho, and the prætorian bands steady in their allegiance to Otho, notwithstanding the offers of Vitellius, the two chiefs began to employ snares and ministers of death against each other: assassins were dispatched by

^a Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 71.

Otho into Germany, and by Vitellius to Rome; but the attempts on both sides were defeated °.

The first advices from abroad that raised Otho's hopes, were from Illyricum, whence he received advice, that the legions in Dalmatia, in Pannonia and Mœsia, had declared for him, and sworn allegiance. The army in Judæa was by Vespasian induced to swear allegiance to Otho, as were the legions in Syria by Mucianus governor of that province. Egypt too, and all the provinces extending to the East, submitted to him. The like homage was paid him in Africa, in Spain, and in Narbonne Gaul; but the latter province soon acceded to the party of Vitellius, which was the nearest and strongest. Aquitain likewise first declared for Otho; but soon after, from the same motive, swore fealty to Vitellius: for there was no real zeal, as Tacitus observes, in the people for the cause and interest of either of the pretenders, and only by the impressions of fear they were transported, and changed from one side to another. Otho, in the mean time, as if full peace had reigned, applied himself to the civil administration of the empire: in the senate he made many conciliating and popular harangues; upon such ancient senators as had already sustained the first employments in the state, he conferred the pontifical or augural dignities; several young noblemen lately recalled from exile, he invested with such sacerdotal offices as had been enjoyed by their fathers or ancestors. To Cadius Rufus, Pedius Blæsus, and Scævinius Promptinus, senators degraded in the reigns of Claudius and Nero, he restored their former dignity. By the like benevolence he attempted to gain the affections of whole cities and provinces. He supplied the colonies of Hispalis and Emerita with a fresh recruit of families, and made the whole people of the Lingons free of Rome. To the province of Bætica he subjected all the cities of Mauritania; and granted great privileges to the Cappadocians and Africans. But not forgetting, even while his sovereignty was at stake, to honour the memory of his once-favoured Poppæa, he procured a decree from the senate for replacing her several statues, which had been thrown down after the death of Nero: he suffered the statues of that prince to be reared in public places, and did not betray any distaste, but rather satisfaction, upon his being saluted by the people in the theatre with the name of Nero Otho °.

Most of the provinces declare for Otho.

He studies to gain their affections.

° Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 73. Suet. in Oth. cap. 8. Plut. in Oth.
 ° Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 77. Suet. cap. 7. Plut. in Oth.

While

*The Roxo-
lanians de-
feated.*

While the minds of all men were intent upon the progress and issue of the civil war, the Roxolanians, a people of Sarmatia, having made an irruption into Mœsia, to the number of nine thousand men, and cut off two cohorts, were unexpectedly attacked by the third legion, defeated, and obliged to take shelter in the marshes, where, through the rigour of the winter, they all perished. For this victory, Marcus Aponius, governor of Rome, was distinguished with a triumphal statue: and the consular ornaments were granted to Fulvius Aurelius, Julianus Titus, and Numisius Lupus, commanders of the legions in that country. Great was Otho's joy on this occasion; for to himself he assumed the glory, as if the success in war was owing to his auspices¹.

*A sedition
among the
prætorian
guards.*

At Rome in the mean time arose, from an unforeseen accident, a sedition, which well nigh involved the city in destruction. Otho had ordered the seventeenth legion to be removed from Ostia, where it was quartered, to Rome, and committed the care of supplying them with arms to Varius Crispinus, a tribune of the prætorian guards. Crispinus choosing, for the execution of his orders, the close of the evening, when the camp was composed, and the soldiers retired to their tents, directed the armoury to be thrown open, and the carriages belonging to the cohorts to be loaded. The lateness of the hour aroused the jealousy of the drunken soldiery. Some of the most turbulent, and most intoxicated, began to cry out, that Crispinus was disaffected to Otho; that the senate was arming against the person and cause of their emperor; and that those arms were to be employed, not for him, as Crispinus pretended, but against him. This report being immediately spread through the camp, a general uproar ensued; they seized their arms, and having cut in pieces Crispinus, while he was endeavouring to repress their seditious fury, and with him such of the centurions as were remarkable for severity of discipline, they instantly marched to Rome, and advanced with their drawn swords to the imperial palace. Otho was then entertaining the chief lords, and the women of the greatest distinction in the city. As they doubted whether the danger proceeded from the mutiny of the soldiery, or the premeditated treachery of the emperor, they were all seized with dread and terror, and not knowing whether they should fly or stay, constantly watched the countenance of Otho; who, being alarmed at the danger

¹ Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 79.

threat-

threatening his guests, amongst whom were eighty senators, not only dispatched forthwith the captains of the guards to mitigate the rage of the soldiers, but ordered the company to retire with all speed by private ways.

They were no sooner gone than the soldiers, breaking down the gates of the palace, forced their way into the banquetting-room, and there, with one voice, demanded *Their rage and fury.*

to have a fight of Otho, having in their passage wounded Julius Martialis and Vitellius Saturninus, two officers who endeavoured to oppose their tumultuous entrance. On every side arms were brandished, and terrible menaces uttered, not only against the tribunes and centurions, but against the whole body of the senate; for as they could assign no particular victim to their fury, they claimed a latitude for general slaughter, asserting that the whole senate had conspired against Otho; till the emperor, rising from his couch, by supplications, intreaties, and even tears, to the disgrace of the imperial dignity, prevailed upon them, with great difficulty, to desist, and return to their camp. Next day the houses in the city continued close shut up; not a person was to be seen in the streets; and the soldiers, with down-cast looks, shewed rather tokens of anger and rage than remorse. Their captains, therefore, Licinius Proculus and Plotius Primus, harangued them in companies apart, and endeavoured to appease their fury; but to no purpose, till they distributed among them a large sum, amounting to five thousand sesterces a man. Then, and not before, Otho ventured to enter the camp, where the soldiers, returned at length to a sense of their duty, gathered round him, and, with a composed behaviour, required that the authors of the insurrection should be put to death. *They are appeased with a large donation.* The emperor, ascending the tribunal, represented the enormity of their late conduct, enlarged on the respect due to the senate, and the necessity of maintaining military discipline in the camp; but as he knew, that a sovereignty, like his, acquired by flagrant iniquity, could never be preserved by reviving the rigid virtue and discipline of the ancient Romans, he concluded, that of the late transgression but few were guilty, and that of these few two only should be punished. His speech was favourably received, and two of the ringleaders in the late tumult were immediately executed, no one shewing the least concern for them, though capital punishment was inflicted in the sight of their comrades and the whole army.

Thus was the sedition entirely quelled; but nevertheless the city still continued in the utmost consternation, from the apprehension of a civil war, and the dread of being *The consternation of the city.* involved

involved in the same calamities which had proved fatal to it in the time of Antony and Octavianus. They were, on one hand, under the necessity of obliging Otho, and, on the other, afraid to enrage Vitellius, who was supported by a strong party, and might ultimately get the better of his rival. The soldiers, dispersed all over the city, crept into houses in disguised habits, as spies, watching for matter of mischief and destruction against such as were distinguished for their nobility or wealth. Some too believed, that certain soldiers from the army of Vitellius were arrived at Rome, to sound the affections of the Roman people. Hence all places were filled with suspicion and distrust; and men were not exempt from caution and fear in the most secret recesses of their own houses. But, in public, this sort of dread chiefly prevailed: there people studied with great care to frame their faces agreeable to the quality of the news that were said to be brought, that they might not seem to betray any diffidence, when affairs bore an ambiguous aspect, or be slow in rejoicing, when they appeared prosperous. The senators chiefly, when assembled, were at a loss how to preserve in all points a safe and unexceptionable conduct. They dreaded the consequences that might attend their issuing decrees against Vitellius; but were afraid that, by forbearing to issue them, they might rouse the jealousy of Otho. In this perplexity, without publishing any decrees, they contented themselves with uttering invectives against Vitellius, but such as being common and vulgar, were not remarkable; and even these the most wary took care to utter when many were speaking at once^{*}.

The general alarm heightened by several prodigies.

The general terror was increased by several prodigies said to have happened at this time. From the hands of the statue of Victory triumphant, standing upon the chariot in the porch of the Capitol, the reins dropped, as if she were grown too weak to hold them any longer. From Juno's chapel suddenly arose an apparition of a size more than human. The statue of Julius Cæsar, in an island in the Tiber, turned round from west to east, upon a day utterly free from tempests. In Etruria an ox spoke; divers animals were said to have produced unnatural births; but the most affecting omen was a hasty and dreadful inundation of the Tiber, whose waters, swelling to an immense height, overthrew the Sublician bridge, and having their course obstructed by the heap of ruins, not only overflowed the adjacent parts, but covered places which were reckoned se-

^{*} Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 80—85.

cure against any such disaster. Many were swept away in the streets, and many drowned in their shops and beds. Amongst the populace a famine ensued, the corn and other provisions being in great part carried away by the river. As soon as the waters returned into their channel, Otho performed the solemnity of lustration, and purified the city with sacrifices. Then weighing carefully with his friends all the methods of conducting the war, he resolved to send a powerful force by sea to invade Narbonne Gaul, since the Apennine Mountains, with those of the Cottian Alps, and all the other approaches to Gaul, were blocked up by the armies of Vitellius. With this view he reinforced the navy and the marines with a detachment from the prætorian bands. The direction in chief of the expedition was committed to Antonius Novellus, to Suedius Clemens, both lately centurions of the first rank, and to Æmilius Pacen-fis, a tribune, dismissed by Galba, and now by Otho re-instated. Oscan, one of the emperor's freedmen, was charged with the care of the ships, and employed to inspect the fidelity and behaviour of the other officers. As for Otho himself, he resolved to march against Cæcina and Valens, at the head of the prætorian guards, and the other troops which were then quartered in the neighbourhood of Rome. Under him commanded, as lieutenants, Suetonius Paulinus, Marius Celsus, and Annius Gallus, all men of known valour and experience, and capable of performing great exploits, had not Otho placed his chief confidence in Licinius Proculus, captain of the prætorian guards, and suffered himself to be governed by him, though quite unexperienced in war.

Otho proposes to take the field.

Otho, before he left Rome, ordered Cornelius Dolabella to retire to Aquinum in Campania, where he was kept under confinement, being obnoxious on account of the ancient lustre of his name, and kindred to Galba. Then the emperor ordered many of the magistrates, and a great part of such as had been consuls, to prepare for the field, with no design of allowing them any share in the war, but only under colour of accompanying him (E). Great on this oc-

Otho orders the chief nobility to follow him.

• Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 87.

(E) Amongst these was included Lucius, the brother of Vitellius, whom Otho did not distinguish with any new marks either of his favour or displeasure. Vitellius had likewise left at Rome his mother, his wife,

and his children; and to these Otho, either through fear, or from an affected moderation, shewed a tender regard, commending them to the protection of his friends,

cation was the confirmation of the city; the chief senators were disabled by age from bearing the toils of war; the nobles were sunk in sloth, and through a long peace were entirely ignorant of the military laws; the Roman knights were unacquainted with the functions and duties of a camp. The more these degrees of men strove to conceal their fear, the more apparently they discovered it. Some, to disguise their want of courage, purchased gay and glaring armour, with fine and stately horses; others provided materials for riot and feasting, as so many implements of war. The giddy and thoughtless multitude were puffed up with vain hopes. Those who found their fortunes and credit desperate during peace, rejoiced in the public commotions, promising to themselves in particular more security in the general distraction; but they all soon felt the heavy evils and pressures of war, the price of provisions being doubled, and the populace at once deprived of the usual bounties of the prince, who could not, without much difficulty, find corn and money to supply his numerous armies¹.

*Takes his
leave of
the senate;*

When Otho's forces were ready to take the field, he assembled the senate on the fourteenth of March, and to their care recommended the commonwealth: he ordered the people to meet, and in a long speech to them boasted, that his interest and title were supported by the majesty of the city, and the joint consent of the people and senate. Against the partisans of Vitellius he spoke with moderation and restraint, taxing the German legions rather with ignorance than with insolence and rebellion: of Vitellius he made no mention. In all military deliberations he consulted Suetonius Paulinus and Marius Celsus; in his civil administration he was believed to employ the talents of Galerius Trachalus. The emperor's speech was received by the populace with loud shouts and acclamations, each striving to surpass the other in strains of flattery. Otho, upon leaving Rome, committed to his brother Salvius Titianus the charge of maintaining its tranquility, and of managing the other affairs of the empire. When he had thus settled matters in the city, he at last set out, at the head of the prætorian cohorts, with a chosen body of such of the prætorian bands as served under the standard of veterans, and a great number of marines. He himself marched before the ensigns on foot, wearing a breast-plate of iron, in the rough attire of a soldier, without the least attention to his person, which he had been used to cultivate with all the art of the most luxurious effeminacy².

*and leaves
Rome.*

¹ Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 22, 23. ² Ibid. lib. ii. cap. 22.

Fortune seconded his first attempts ; for his fleet, having made a descent in the province of the maritime Alps, defeated the Ligurians, whom Marius Maturus, who governed that province in quality of procurator, had armed against them, plundered Albium Intemelium, now Vintimiglia, and laid waste the whole country. In the mean time news being sent in great haste and alarm to Fabius Valens, that Otho's fleet was upon the coast of Narbonne Gaul, he sent thither two cohorts of Tungrians, four troops of horse, and the whole Squadron of Treverians, under the command of Julius Classicus. To these were joined a cohort of Ligurians, and five hundred Pannonians. They no sooner arrived, than they were attacked by Otho's troops, who had already landed. The engagement lasted till night, and was renewed next day, when Vitellius's forces were at length put to flight with great slaughter : however, as the victory proved very bloody, the victors retired to Albiugaunum, a municipal city in Liguria, and there continued without making any farther attempts upon Narbonne Gaul. At the same time Decimus Pacarius, governor of Corsica, having declared for Vitellius, was slain by the inhabitants, who brought his head to Otho *.

The success of his fleet in Narbonne Gaul.

In Italy, the whole country which extends from the Po to the Alps was possessed by the troops of Vitellius ; for the squadron of horse, named Syllana, had brought over with them several cities to his party, as we have related ; and the cohorts, which Cæcina had sent thither before him, were already arrived. To them therefore several cities submitted, not from any affection to Vitellius, or that they preferred his cause to that of Otho ; but because they were enervated by long peace and ease, ready for any bondage, and the easy acquisition of the first comer. At Cremona Vitellius's men surprised and took prisoners a cohort of Pannonians ; and between Placentia and Ticinum intercepted a hundred horse and a thousand marines. Animated with this success, they passed the Po, opposite Placentia, where it was reported, that Cæcina approached with his whole army. Vestrius Spurinna, who commanded in that city for Otho, with five cohorts of the prætorian guards, a thousand veterans, and a few horse, though he was certain that Cæcina was not yet come, determined to confine his own men within the fortifications ; but they, headstrong, unmanageable, and unacquainted with discipline, snatching up the ensigns and standards, sallied out tumultuously, turning against their own commander, while he strove to restrain

The country between the Po and the Alps submits to Vitellius.

* Tacit. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 15—19.

them, the points of their weapons, and exclaiming, that a plot was intended, and Cæcina treacherously called in; so that Spurrinna was obliged to approve their resolution, since it was not in his power to prevent it. With them therefore he marched out of Placentia, and arriving, as night approached, within sight of the Po, represented to them the necessity of pitching and fortifying their camp against any sudden attack. This toil, not able to be borne by men used to the gaieties of the city, soon abated their courage; all over the camp dutiful and submissive language was heard; they applauded with one voice the prudent care of their commander, who, for the seat of the war, had chosen a colony so strong and opulent; and, submitting to orders, suffered themselves to be led back the same night to Placentia, where the walls were forthwith strengthened, and new bulwarks added.

*Cæcina
besieges
Placentia.*

In the mean time Cæcina, having passed the Alps, entered Italy. After having attempted in vain to corrupt and seduce Otho's forces, he resolved to lay siege to Placentia; and accordingly encamped before the place. The first day passed in mutual reproaches, Cæcina's men marching up to the walls, and upbraiding Spurrinna's upon the ramparts, as players, dancers, idle spectators of Pythian and Olympic games, men corrupted by the licentious amusements of the theatre and circus, who triumphed in the murdering of Galba, a naked and disarmed old man, but were not very forward to face an enemy in the field. These reproaches so inflamed the besieged, that next day, when Cæcina ordered a general assault, they behaved with incredible bravery, made a dreadful slaughter of his men, and obliged them to retreat in the utmost confusion. In this conflict, the amphitheatre of Placentia, which stood without the walls, the most stately and capacious in Italy, was burnt down. This defeat brought great disgrace upon the party of Vitellius. Cæcina, ashamed of his disappointment, immediately repassed the Po, and bent his march towards Cremona. Upon his march, Turullius Cerealis revolted to him with a great number of marines, and Julius Briganticus with a few horse *.

*Is forced to
raise the
siege.*

*Vitellius's
auxiliaries
defeated.*

About the same time Martius Macer, who commanded under Otho a body of two thousand gladiators, having embarked them upon the Po, landed unexpectedly on the opposite shore, where he surprised and defeated the auxiliary troops which belonged to the forces of Vitellius, cut many of them to pieces, and obliged the rest to take refuge in

* Tacit. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 20—23. Plut. in Oth.

Cremona. Macer restrained his men from pursuing them, lest the fugitives, strengthened by succours from the city, might have changed the fortune of the day. From this restraint, great distrust arose amongst the suspicious soldiers of Otho, the most cowardly urging criminal imputations against their leaders, and putting a malevolent construction upon all their proceedings. Cæcina, much concerned to see all his enterprizes abortive, and fearing lest Fabius Valens, who was now approaching, should rob him of the whole glory of the war, hurried with more impatience than circumspection to retrieve his honour. At a place about twelve miles from Cremona, named Castores, he secretly conveyed the flower of his auxiliaries into the woods, which lay just above the great road; the horse he commanded to advance, and, after having engaged the enemy, to retreat, till the auxiliaries, lying in the woods, should have an opportunity of rising at once out of their ambush, and falling upon the enemy. This stratagem being discovered by some deserters to Otho's generals, Paulinus and Celsus, they craftily drew Cæcina's forces into the same snare; for Paulinus taking the command of the foot, and Celsus that of the horse, they placed three cohorts in close ranks in the high road, and on either side of it concealed, among the woods, the first legion, the thirteenth, six cohorts of auxiliaries, and a thousand horse. The three cohorts in the high road were immediately attacked by Cæcina's horse, who, after having stood their ground a while, turned their backs, and fled: but Celsus, who was aware of the artifice, withheld his men from pursuing them; and in the mean time the forces which Cæcina had concealed in the woods, were discovered in their ambush. Then Celsus, pretending fear, retired insensibly before them, till they found themselves surrounded on all sides; for on both their flanks they were attacked by the cohorts of the legions, and the horse suddenly wheeling about, fell upon them in the rear.

*Cæcina
defeated.*

Fabius Valens arrived with the troops under his command at Ticinum; where, while he was fortifying his camp, news were brought of the late unsuccessful battle. On this occasion his troops, accusing him of treachery, as if he had, by feigned delays, detained them from assisting at the engagement, put themselves in motion, without waiting for their general's orders, to join Cæcina. Upon the junction of the forces of Valens with those of Cæcina, the officers of Vitellius declared for a decisive battle. Otho, on the other hand, advancing to a village between Cremona and Verona, called Bedriacum, had recourse to a consultation, whether it were adviseable to protract the war, or

*The officers
of Vitellius
incline to a
decisive
battle.*

Otho's officers against engaging the enemy.

risk a battle. Upon this occasion Suetonius Paulinus, the most experienced commander of his age, declared, that it was his opinion, that haste and present action were advantageous to the enemy, but to Otho procrastination and delay, since the entire army of Vitellius was arrived, and in want of necessaries; which obliged them to offer battle, as the speediest way of supplying their present want. On the contrary, Otho's army was abundantly provided: Italy, the senate, and the people of Rome, were at his devotion, and ready to supply him, not only with provisions, but with treasure, more necessary than the sword in all civil dissensions. Besides, several provinces had revolted from Vitellius; whereas all the countries, which had at first declared for Otho, continued inviolably attached to his interest. In his front lay the river Po; his cities were secure in the strength of men and walls; and that none of them would yield to the attacks of the enemy, was evident from the brave defence of Placentia. He added, that were the war protracted till the summer, the Germans, of all the enemy's forces the most formidable, could never endure so great a change of country and climate, but insensibly moulder away, and vanish, with all their terrors. He concluded, that as the legions of Pannonia, Dalmatia, and Mœsia, were upon their march, and would arrive in a few days, the emperor might then resume the present deliberation; and if it were judged advisable to engage, he might bring into the field a much more numerous army. With the counsel of Paulinus, Marius Celsus concurred; and Annus Gallus, who was absent, being ill of the hurt which he had received a few days before from his horse falling with him, declared to those who were sent to learn his advice, that he entertained the same sentiments, and would have the emperor by all means to wait, at least till the legions from Pannonia, Dalmatia, and Mœsia, had joined him. But Otho, Titianus his brother, and Proculus, were determined upon engaging: the two latter, hurried by rashness and want of experience, were always averring, that fortune, and the gods, and the deity of Otho, attended upon his counsels, and would undoubtedly prosper his enterprizes; to such gross flattery had they recourse, that no one might dare to thwart their opinion, which in the end prevailed.

Otho resolves to venture a battle.

When an engagement was resolved upon, it was debated next in council, whether the emperor should be present in the action, or remove elsewhere. Tatianus and Proculus advised him to retire to Brixellum, now Bressello, where, secure from the uncertain accidents of battles, he should reserve himself, they said, for the direction

tion of the whole, and the great ends of sovereignty. Paulinus and Celsus, that they might not seem to advise exposing the person of the prince to perils, dared not oppose his departure. This advice, which Otho readily embraced, was attended with two bad consequences; for he considerably weakened the army, by taking with him a numerous detachment of the best troops to guard him; and besides, the forces remaining lost all courage, since they suspected the fidelity of their leaders. In the mean time, the band of gladiators, who served under Otho, being attacked and defeated by a detachment of Germans, the death of Macer, who commanded those gladiators, was required by the whole army: they had already wounded him with a lance, and were falling upon him with their drawn swords, when, by the sudden interposition of the tribunes and centurions, he was rescued. However, Otho being obliged to remove him, sent Flavius Sabinus, brother to Vespasian, to take the charge of the forces that had been under his command.

*Otho re-
sists to
Brixellum.*

After the departure of Otho to Brixellum, the name and honour of the generalship remained with his brother Titianus, but the whole authority resided in Proculus. Celsus and Paulinus were on no occasion consulted, but only bore the empty title of commanders, and thence served to answer for the faults and mistakes of others. The tribunes and centurions were under the greatest concern, to see men of superior worth and capacity thus neglected, while the worst bore the greatest authority: but the common soldiers, who suspected their fidelity, were chearful and elated, though rather disposed to censure and dispute, than to obey and execute, the orders of their commanders. The two armies were encamped on the banks of the Po, whence Otho's forces moved their quarters, and retired within four miles of Bedriacum. Their march was so unskilfully conducted, that they were extremely distressed for want of water, though it was then the spring of the year, about the thirteenth of April, and there were rivers on all quarters. Proculus was for continuing the march next day, with a design to attack the enemy, who were encamped sixteen miles distant, at the confluence of the Adda and the Po. This resolution was vehemently opposed by Celsus and Paulinus, who declared against exposing the army, fatigued with marching, and loaded with baggage, to the enemy, who being themselves light and unincumbered, and having moved scarce four miles, would never lose the advantage of attacking them, either as they marched with their ranks broken, or afterwards, while they were fortifying their camp.

*The whole
power de-
volved up-
on Pro-
culus.*

*Otho orders
them to en-
gage with-
out delay.*

This point was still under debate, when a Numidian, dispatched by Otho upon a swift horse, arrived with letters to the generals; wherein the emperor, having sharply reproached them with want of spirit and resolution, commanded them to engage, without loss of time. Upon the receipt of the emperor's letters, Celsus and Paulinus dropped all opposition, and the army immediately decamped.

*The signal
of battle
given.*

The same day two tribunes of the prætorian guards came to Cæcina, as he was intent upon building a bridge across the Po, and desired a conference. He was just going to receive their overtures, when the spies, in great haste, apprised him, that the enemy was at hand. The discourse with the tribunes being thus interrupted, it remained uncertain, whether they intended to betray their own party, to contrive a plot against the enemy, or had some design truly worthy and honest. Cæcina having dismissed the tribunes, immediately quitted his post upon the river, and repaired to the camp, where he found the signal of battle already given by Valens, and the soldiers under arms. While Valens was drawing up his legions, his cavalry sallied out, but were by a party of Otho's forces, much inferior in number, repulsed, and forced to fly for shelter to their ramparts; whence the Italic legion, with their drawn swords, drove them back to the encounter. The legions of Vitellius were ranged in order of battle, without the least consternation or alarm; for though the enemy approached, they were prevented from seeing them by a thick coppice.

*Great confusion in
Otho's
army.*

In the army of Otho an universal confusion prevailed; the generals distrusted the soldiery, and the soldiery were incensed against their generals. The carriages and retainers to the camp were mixed and crowded amongst the ranks; from a deep ditch on each hand, the way was too straight, even for an army marching, where no danger from an enemy was to be apprehended. No order was observed, some thrusting themselves into the front, some retiring to the rear, as each found himself prompted by bravery or by fear. Besides, a groundless report was spread amongst the foremost ranks of Otho's army, that the forces of Vitellius had revolted, and would join them immediately. Upon this report, they accosted the enemy with the salutation of friends; but the others returned the compliment with an hostile and threatening murmur, which not only disheartened them, but gave occasion to the rest, who were unapprised of the cause of such greeting, to apprehend that they were betrayed. At the same time the enemy attacked with

great vigour; and Otho's troops, though fewer in number, *The battle of Bedriacum.* and fatigued, sustained the charge with great resolution and intrepidity. As the place was embarrassed with trees, hedges, and vineyards, they fought without regularity, bearing down one upon another, body to body, buckler to buckler, with swords and axes, after a dreadful manner, each man exerting his strength, as if the event of the whole war depended upon his valour. In the open plain, between the Po and the high-way, two legions chanced to encounter; the one-and-twentieth belonging to Vitellius, and named Rapax; and the first on Otho's side, entitled Adjutrix. The former was famous for feats of valour; the latter till then had never been led into the field, but was fierce, resolute, and eager of acquiring renown. They engaged with incredible fury, rejecting the use of darts, and closing resolutely with swords and axes. After a long and bloody contest, the soldiers of the first having routed the foremost ranks of the one-and-twentieth, carried off their eagle; a disgrace which so enraged this legion, that they returned to the charge, slew Orphidius Benignus, commander of the first, and took several standards. In another quarter, the thirteenth legion, which fought for Otho, was defeated by the fifth. Alphenus Varius, at the head of his Batavians, having entirely routed Otho's gladiators, attacked his army in flank; a circumstance which struck the prætorian bands with such a panic, that they fled precipitately, putting in disorder such of their own men as still kept their ranks, and faced the enemy. *Otho's army routed.*

Thus the whole army retired in the utmost confusion towards Bedriacum. As the ways were obstructed by the bodies of the slain (for above forty thousand fell on both sides), the enemy made a dreadful slaughter of the fugitives, it being of no advantage to take prisoners, who, in civil wars, were not converted into property. Suetonius and Proculus took different routes, both avoiding that to the camp, from an apprehension of the soldiery, who had already charged their commanders with the loss of the battle. Vedius Aquila, commander of the thirteenth legion, having with more courage than discretion, entered the camp, while it was yet day, was charged by the troops that had remained there, and by those who were returned from the battle, as a traitor to the cause, and abused in a most outrageous manner; not that he had really committed any crime, but such is the custom of the multitude, for every man to cast upon others his own guilt and disgrace. Titianus and Celsus durst not retire into the camp till night, when the guards were already posted, and the tumult of the soldiery repressed.

pressed, The victorious army of Vitellius pursued the fugitives within five miles of Bedriacum, where they halted, not thinking it safe to attempt forcing the enemy's camp the same day; and besides, they entertained hopes of a voluntary surrender.

Those who fled to the camp surrendered.

Otho's forces seemed disposed to make a vigorous defence, boasting that they had been overthrown by acts of treachery, not by the superior bravery of the enemy: but the officers, and Titianus himself, in a council which they held the day following, agreed to send deputies to Cæcina and Valens, to treat of a surrender. Their proposals were accepted, and, upon the return of the deputies, the gates of the camp were thrown open. Then both armies meeting, the conquerors, as well as the conquered, burst into tears, and at once pleased and grieved, lamented the dreadful consequences of civil wars. Assembling now without distinction, in the same tents, they dressed, with great tenderness, one another's wounds. There were scarce any so exempt from affliction, as not to have some dead friend to bewail. The bodies of Orphidius, and other officers of distinction, were sought for and buried with the usual solemnity. Finally, they all submitted to Vitellius, and took the oath of allegiance².

Otho acquainted with the defeat of his army.

Otho waited at Brixellum for an account of the battle. Reports were melancholy, but uncertain, till the fugitives brought a certain account of the total defeat. The first who arrived with the dismal tidings was a common soldier, who, being taxed with falsehood and cowardice by some persons about the emperor, to convince them of the truth of this account, and to shew that he had not fled for want of courage, fell upon his own sword at the feet of Otho; who, admiring his resolution and fidelity, cried out, "No more such worthy and gallant men shall, on my account, be brought into danger." The battle was not decisive; for Otho had still with him many brave troops, inviolably attached to his cause and interest: his forces beyond the Po still remained entire; there were numerous garrisons in Bedriacum and Placentia; and the legions from Mœsia, Dalmatia, and Pannonia, were advancing; besides, the Asiatic, Syrian, and Egyptian legions, were already near the Adriatic. Nevertheless, he was no sooner informed of the defeat of his army, than he manifestly discovered a fixed purpose of sacrificing his life to the public tranquillity. The soldiers, apprised of his design, did all that lay in their power to support him under his affliction. They pressed

His design to destroy himself.

² Tacit. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 41—45, Plut. in Oth.

him not to despair, declaring, without flattery or deceit, that they were ready, for his sake, to expose themselves to the greatest dangers, and suffer all extremities. Those who stood at a distance, signified their zeal and ardour, by stretching out their hands; such as were nearest fell at his knees, kissed his hand, and entreated him to accept of that duty and fidelity which could never expire but with their last breath. Above all, the intrepidity and fidelity of an obscure and private soldier displayed itself on this occasion; for finding the emperor stood altogether unshaken and fixed in his purpose, he drew his sword, and, addressing himself to Otho, "From, this, Cæsar (said he), judge of our fidelity; for there is not a man amongst us but would strike thus to serve you?" he then turned his sword against himself, and fell at the emperor's feet. Plautius Firmus, captain of his guards, by repeated entreaties besought him not to abandon an army so faithful and zealous; soldiers so singularly affectionate and loyal. "In bearing calamities (said he), more greatness of mind is shewn than in flying from them. To support themselves with hope, even in spite of fortune, was ever the part of the magnanimous and brave, as it was that of the timorous and spiritless to be drawn by cowardice into utter despair." As, during these expressions, Otho happened to look cheerful or pensive, there followed shouts of joy, or dismal groans. Nor was this zeal confined to the prætorian guards, who were inviolably attached to the person of Otho; but those troops who had been sent before the rest out of Mœsia, and were now arrived, declared, that in the approaching army the same steadiness prevailed, and that the legions had already reached Aquileia. Hence it is evident, that the war might have been renewed, and that its issue, notwithstanding the late defeat, was altogether uncertain: but neither by persuasions and entreaties, nor by all the apparent probability of success, could Otho be prevailed upon to continue the war, or be diverted from the resolution he had taken; a resolution which no one expected from a person of his apparent effeminate temper.

Having commanded silence, he spoke to them after this manner: "This day, my fellow-soldiers, which gives me such sensible proofs of your affection and loyalty, is far preferable to that on which you saluted me emperor. I therefore beseech you not to deny me the satisfaction of laying down my life for the preservation of so many brave men. To expose wantonly to fresh perils such virtue and so much fortitude, is a price which I judge too high for the redeeming of my own life. I am well apprised, that the enemy

The zeal of his soldiers.

His speech before he dies.

enemy has neither gained an entire nor a decisive victory : I have advice that the Mœsian army is not far off ; that the legions from Asia, Syria, and Egypt, are near the Adriatic ; that the forces in Judæa have declared for us ; the senate favours our cause ; and we have in our power the wives and children of our enemies : but, alas ! it is not with Pyrrhus, with Hannibal, with the Cimbrians, we fight ; but it is eagle against eagle, and Rome against Rome. Italy must bleed, whether I vanquish or am vanquished ; and even he who triumphs will have occasion to mourn. I cannot bear the thought, that such a number of Roman youth, that so many noble armies should be cut off, and ravished for ever from the commonwealth. With me let me carry this satisfaction, that for my cause you were all ready to die ; but be content to survive me. Vitellius began the civil war, and thence sprung the source of our struggling for the empire by arms. To me will be owing the example of struggling for it no more than once. By this rule, let posterity judge of Otho. Vitellius shall again possess in safety his brother, his children, and his wife. Others have held the sovereignty longer ; in a manner more glorious none ever yet relinquished it. Assure yourselves, it is my free choice to die rather than to reign, since I cannot so much advance the Roman state by wars and bloodshed, as by sacrificing myself to the public peace and tranquility. Nothing but my death can seal a lasting peace, and secure Italy against such another unhappy day. Let us no longer retard one another : let not me delay your care of your own preservation, nor you me in the pursuit of a design never to be shaken or changed. To multiply words about the subject of dying, is the part of a dastardly spirit. How much I am undaunted in this my purpose, I desire you to take this signal proof, that I complain of no man, since, to blame the gods or men ; upon the approach of death, implies a mean and indirect desire of living *."

*His calm
behaviour.*

After this discourse, he desired his attendants to leave him, and submit without any delay to Vitellius. The young men he pressed with authority, the old by entreaties, addressing himself to all with great courtesy, in a language suitable to their years or dignity. At the same time he rebuked, as ill-judged and unreasonable, the tears and lamentations of his friends, with a countenance calm and composed, and a speech cool and determined. To such as were ready to depart, he ordered boats and carriages to be given. To those who were absent, he sent passports, forbidding

* Tacit. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 46, 47. Plut. in Oth. Dio, lib. lxiv. p. 732, 733. Suet. cap. 9.

any one to stop them in their journey. All memorials and letters, remarkable for expressions of zeal towards him, or for invectives against Vitellius, he committed to the flames. What money and jewels he had, he distributed amongst his friends.

After having taken these precautions, he caused all those who were about him to retire; and, withdrawing into a private room, he wrote consolatory letters to his sister, and to Messalina, who had been formerly wedded to Nero, and whom he himself had designed to marry, recommending to her his memory and ashes. While he was thus exercising his thoughts about his last moments, a sudden tumult interrupted him; for notice was brought of an insurrection among the soldiers, who threatened with present death all who intended to depart, as traitors and deserters. Against Virginius chiefly they were enraged, and had already besieged his house. On this information Otho, appearing again, reprimanded the authors of the mutiny, gave audience to such as were departing, and continued thus employed till they were all gone in perfect safety. He then withdrew again to his chamber, which he left open till the night was far advanced, allowing free entrance to all who were desirous to see him. Having quenched his thirst with a draught of cold water, he called for two daggers, and having carefully examined the points of both, he placed the sharpest under his pillow. He next resolved to be fully assured that his friends were gone; a circumstance which he no sooner understood, than he lay down, passing the night in perfect repose, and, as is affirmed, not without sleep. At break of day he seized the dagger, and gave himself a mortal stab on the left side of the breast. Upon hearing him groan, his freedmen entered, and his slaves, with Plotius Firmus, captain of his guards: they found no more than one wound.

Writes to his sister, and to Messalina.

His death.

His death was no sooner divulged than the whole place resounded with the mournful cries of the soldiers, blaming themselves with the deepest concern for not watching him more carefully, and striving to save a life which was laid down to preserve their's. His funeral was dispatched with great expedition (for such had been his own desire), to prevent his head being cut off, and exposed to public derision. The prætorian cohorts bore his corpse, magnificently attired, often kissing his wound and his hand, and even paying him divine honours. At his funeral pile some of the soldiers slew themselves; and others who were at Bedriacum, Placentia, and in other quarters, understanding the manner of his death, were so deeply and sensibly affected, that

Is lamented by the soldiery.

His obsequies.

His character.

that they slew one another, not caring to outlive a prince whom they so tenderly loved. To him they raised a tomb of a mean structure, with this epitaph only, "To the memory of Marcus Otho;" which they thought the best security against any insults from the conqueror^b. Such was the end of Otho, in the thirty-seventh year of his age, after he had reigned, according to some, three months, according to others, three months and five days. He derived his origin from the municipal city of Terentinum in Hetruria. His father had sustained the dignity of consul; his grandfather that of prætor. His mother's line was not of equal lustre, but far from obscure. He spent his tender years in idleness, his youth in scandalous debaucheries, and grew acceptable to Nero by imitating his profligate life. To him, therefore, as to the chief confidant of his impure pleasures, Nero committed the care of his beloved mistress Poppæa Sabina, till he could accomplish the removal of Octavia, his wife; but soon suspecting him for a rival, he sent him into Lusitania, where the administration of that province furnished a pretence for keeping him from Rome. In Lusitania he governed with gentleness and popularity, was the foremost to espouse the cause of Galba, and promoted it with vigour. Thence he conceived hopes of being adopted by him, and declared his successor; but finding himself disappointed, and seeing nothing but despair in the quiet and establishment of the state (for he lived in a course of riot and expence, which even to the fortune of a sovereign would have proved burdensome), he revolted from Galba, and seized the empire in the manner we have related. His death was as much applauded as his life was censured; for though he had lived like Nero, yet he left this character behind him, that no one ever died more resolutely^c: and indeed nothing can be more glorious in a man than to sacrifice his life for the good of his country.

Otho's troops submit to Vitellius.

After the death of Otho the soldiers again mutinied; nor was there any one to restrain them. They applied to Virginus, pressing him, with many intreaties and menaces, to accept the sovereignty, or at least to go as their ambassador to Cæcina and Valens. Already they were breaking into his house, when he retired by a private way, and escaped. But Rubrius Gallus, a person of great rank, immediately undertook the embassy to Vitellius's commanders, and obtained pardon for all the troops that lay at Brixellum; and at the same time Flavius Sabinus prevailed upon the

^b Tacit. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 49. Suet. cap. 11. Plut. in Oth.

^c Tacit. *ibid.* cap. 50. Suet. Plut. in Oth.

forces

forces under his command to go over to the conqueror ; so that war had now every-where ceased, and peace was at once re-established. Many senators had accompanied Otho from Rome, and had been afterwards by him left with a small body of troops at Mutina. Here the senators found themselves exposed to great danger ; for news being brought thither of the defeat, the soldiers slighted it as a report void of truth : suspecting the senate to be disaffected to Otho, they watched the words of every individual, and wrested even their countenances and behaviour to a malignant sense. At last they proceeded to insult them with invectives, and seemed only to want a pretence of putting them all to the sword. On the other hand, they were afraid of being deemed disaffected to Vitellius, whose brother was among them, if they seemed slow and cool in their rejoicings for the victory. They resolved, therefore, to return as far as Bononia, and wait for more certain intelligence. They posted men upon the several roads leading to the city, to examine such as passed. By these one of Otho's freedmen being questioned, why he had quitted his lord, answered, that he had about him his lord's last will and commands ; and that he had left him indeed alive, but fixed in his purpose of dying, and of sacrificing his life to the public tranquillity. Upon this notice they immediately declared for Vitellius, whose brother now presented himself to be flattered, as did all the senators to flatter him ; when on a sudden Cœnus, a freedman of Nero, arriving, affirmed, that by the arrival of the fourteenth legion, in conjunction with the forces from Brixellum, the army which had lately conquered was entirely routed, and the fortune of the other party retrieved and changed. What prompted him to such a forgery was, that Otho's warrants for post-horses, which were now neglected, might be esteemed valid. Cœnus was by these means with great speed carried to Rome ; but there, a few days after, put to death by Vitellius's order. The fiction, however, was believed by the soldiers, who began to threaten the senators for having departed from Mutina, and declared for Vitellius ; insomuch that they were obliged to conceal themselves, not daring, for fear of the incensed soldiery, to appear abroad, till letters from Fabius Valens, assuring them of Otho's death, removed their terrors^d.

Rome was, in the mean time, free from alarm ; the interludes sacred to Ceres, which yearly began on the twelfth, and ending on the nineteenth of April, were celebrating,

^d Tacit. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 53, 54.

when,

*Honours
heaped
upon Vi-
tellius by
the senate.*

when news were brought into the theatre, that Otho had, by a voluntary death, put an end to his life. The spectators immediately, with loud shouts, applauded the name of the new emperor, uttering against Otho the same invectives, which a little before they had poured forth against Vitellius. The troops in the city immediately swore allegiance to Vitellius. The people carried the images of Galba round the temples, crowned with laurels and adorned with flowers; and piled up heaps of coronets, after the manner of a sepulchre, close by the lake of Curtius, where Galba had been slain. In the senate, the many honours given to former princes at intervals, and during a long reign, were at once decreed to Vitellius. On the German armies high commendations were bestowed, and an embassy sent to return public thanks, and congratulate them upon their late victory. The letters, addressed by Fabius Valens to the consuls Virginius Rufus and Poppæus Vopiscus, of whom the first was absent, were publicly read, and found to be conceived in terms no way arrogant; but the modesty of Cæcina was more applauded, who had not sent any, it being deemed assuming in any but the emperor to write to the senate and magistrates^c.

*Italy mi-
serably
afflicted.*

In the mean time Italy was afflicted with greater calamities than she had suffered during the war. The soldiers of Vitellius, distributed amongst the cities and municipal towns, committed dreadful devastations, without sparing even the temples: some, in the disguise of soldiers, killed their particular enemies; and the soldiers themselves, as they were well acquainted with the country, marking out the richest inhabitants, plundered their houses and farms, putting all to fire and sword without mercy, if any resistance was offered. Their generals durst not restrain them, being equally guilty, and intimidated by their men. Of the two Cæcina was less addicted to avarice, but courted the favour of the soldiery. Valens was infamous for pillage and rapine, and thence blind to the excesses of others. Thus, by so mighty a force of foot and horse, by such acts of violence, so many depredations and insults, was Italy quite exhausted, and many of the most wealthy inhabitants reduced to beggary^f.

*Vitellius
receives
intelligence
of the vic-
tory of Be-
driacum.*

Vitellius, not yet apprised of the success of his arms, having left Hordeoneus Flaccus with a sufficient force to guard the banks of the Rhine, was marching towards Italy with the residue of the German army, reinforced with eight thousand men drawn from Britain, and fresh levies hastily

^c Tacit. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 55.

^f Ibid. cap. 56.

made amongst the Gauls. After a few days march he received the agreeable news of the victory of Bedriacum, and the death of Otho. Transported with joy, he assembled his men, and from the tribunal acquainted them with the intelligence he had received, bestowing extravagant praises upon the bravery of his victorious troops. The army, not yielding in the base arts of flattery to the senate, made him, at this juncture, a general request, that he would raise his favourite freedman, Asiaticus, to the equestrian dignity. The emperor, with seeming indignation, rejected their demand; but what in the face of the public he had refused, he soon after privately conferred at a banquet, honouring Asiaticus, a most infamous and rapacious slave, with the gold ring, the badge of knighthood. As he was marching through Gaul, other messengers came with tidings, that both the Mauritanias had acceded to his party: Lucius Albinus who, in quality of procurator, governed there, and had declared for Otho, being killed by the Moors, upon a report that Albinus, scorning the title of procurator, intended to usurp the ensigns of majesty, and the royal name of Juba. With him were slain Asinius Pollio, who commanded a body of horse, Festus and Scipio, both captains of cohorts, and several other officers of distinction. Into these transactions Vitellius made no enquiry, not regarding the murder of so many great men, a hasty hearing being all he afforded to any affair, however important.

The Mauritanias declare for him.

His army pursued their march by land; he himself sailed down the Saone, without the lustre and appointment of an emperor, till Junius Blæsus, governor of Lyonesse Gaul, a man of great generosity and proportionable wealth, furnished him with a princely train, and accompanied him with great state and magnificence. This very behaviour provoked Vitellius against him, though he then disguised his aversion under many courteous expressions. At Lyons he was met by the generals of both parties, the conquerors and the conquered. Valens and Cæcina he commended in public, and placed them on each side his chair of state. Soon after, he ordered the whole army to march out, and meet his son, yet an infant, who was brought covered with an imperial coat of armour. His father, taking him thus dressed in his arms, bestowed upon him the surname of Germanicus, and all the marks of sovereignty. He freely pardoned Salvius Titianus, Otho's brother; the instinct and tenderness of nature which had prompted him to espouse his brother's cause, and his own want of abilities, pleading for him. Of Marius Celsus we are only told, that Vitellius reserved for him the consulship, to which he had

He pursues his march to Italy.

*How he
treats the
generals of
Otho.*

been formerly designed, and which he was to discharge in the month of July. He long postponed admitting Suetonius Paulinus and Licinius Proculus, keeping them in suspense like criminals: at length he heard them, when they both made a defence rather necessary than honourable, and altogether unworthy a man of Paulinus's character; for upon themselves they freely took the guilt of treason, ascribing to a fraud concerted between them the long march before the battle, the great fatigue of Otho's soldiers, and the intermixing the carriages among the troops, when drawn up in battle-array. Vitellius gave credit to the confession of their treachery, and forgave them the crime of fidelity. Galerius Trachalus, who composed Otho's speeches, was saved by Galeria, the wife of Vitellius: but all the centurions, who had signalized their faith and bravery in the cause of Otho, were, by the new emperor's orders, put to the sword; executions which estranged from him the minds of the soldiery, especially of the Illyrian legions. However, he suffered the last wills of such as died fighting for Otho to continue in force, and the law in behalf of those who died intestate.

*Sends several
edicts to
Rome.*

He sent an edict to Rome, to signify that he deferred receiving the name of Augustus, and would not accept that of Cæsar: by another he ordered the astrologers to depart Italy by the calends of October: this was no sooner published, than a libel was hung up in the same style, ordering, in the name of the astrologers, Vitellius Germanicus to quit the world by the same day; a circumstance which so incensed him against all those of that profession, that no sooner was any of them detected, than he caused them, without farther enquiry, to be immediately executed. By a third edict he decreed, under a heavy penalty, that thenceforth no Roman knight should debase himself to fight amongst the gladiators, or with the wild beasts; a practice which had been greatly encouraged by former emperors. Before Vitellius left Lyons, he dispatched orders to Rome for the execution of Dolabella, who had been confined by Otho to the city of Aquinum, and, upon the death of that prince, was returned to Rome. The crimes alleged against him were, that he had broken out of prison, and, presenting himself as a new leader to the vanquished party, had attempted to corrupt the cohort quartered at Ostia. These offences were urged before Flavius Sabinus, governor of the city, by Plautius Varus, a man of prætorian dignity, and one of Dolabella's intimate friends. The charge of treason could not be proved; but nevertheless Vitellius, who dreaded a man of his birth and abilities, and likewise
hated

*Dolabella
falsely ac-
cused.*

hated him on account of his having married Petronia, his divorced wife, resolved to get rid of one whom he looked upon as a competitor. Having therefore sent for him from Rome, and directed him not to take the Flaminian road, but to come round by Interamna, now Terni, he placed assassins there, with orders privately to dispatch him; but they, without waiting till he arrived at the place appointed, massacred him in an inn upon the way, while he was not under the least apprehension of danger^s. This instance of cruelty raised great murmurs among the people and nobility, and brought upon the new reign universal hatred and abhorrence.

and massacred by Vitellius's orders.

From Lyons Vitellius removed to Vienne, where he publicly administered justice, and thence continued his route to Italy. As he was a man of a most voracious appetite, which Tacitus styles altogether beastly and boundless, and greatly addicted to banqueting, from Rome and Italy were brought him dainties of all sorts, and every incentive to gluttony, the roads from both seas being continually filled with carriers loaded with viands for the emperor's table. The chief men of the municipal cities, through which he passed, were quite beggared by the magnificent feasts, by which they made court to the new emperor. The soldiers, following the example of their leader, rioted in all manner of excesses, plundering and laying waste, without control, the cities, villages, and farms, contiguous to the road. The emperor was overtaken on his route by Marcus Cluvius Rufus, governor of Spain, who came to clear himself of the crimes with which he was charged by Hilarius, the emperor's freedman, who urged, that upon advice of the contest between Otho and Vitellius, Cluvius had attempted to establish an independent principality, and to appropriate to himself both the provinces of Spain. The charge appearing groundless, Vitellius ordered his freedman to be punished, and took Cluvius into the number of his chief favourites, commanding him to attend him, without depriving him of the government of Spain, which he still retained, though absent. The like honour was not shewn to Trebellius Maximus, who had fled out of Britain, alarmed by the menaces of the soldiers in that island. In his room was sent Vettius Bolanus, then attending at court. Vitellius arriving in Italy, found the country filled with the troops of his own army, and those of Otho dispersed amongst the villages and municipal towns, and mixed together; so that continual quarrels and disorders ensued;

Vitellius's gluttony.

He receives Cluvius Rufus into favour.

^s Tacit. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 63—65.

for the vanquished legions continued still in their former disaffection, and breathed nothing but war.

He separates the disaffected forces.

The emperor therefore resolved to separate them, and deliver Italy from so heavy a burden. The fourteenth legion was accordingly remanded to Britain, from whence they had been called over by Nero. With them were sent the Batavian cohorts, who had fought for Vitellius; whereas the legion had espoused the cause of Otho: and hence arose a source of perpetual quarrels. The emperor ordered the Batavians, as men in whom he could confide, to be incorporated with his own army, and the legion to be led forthwith over the Alps, shaping their route so as to avoid Vienne; which city was thought to be disaffected to Vitellius. Notwithstanding this order, they no sooner descended from the Alps, than they turned their ensigns to Vienne, and were marching thither, till such as were ripe for mutiny were by the well-affected prevailed upon to march back, in compliance with the emperor's orders, and pursue their route to the coast of the ocean, whence they were transported in a body to Britain. The prætorian cohorts were separated, and then discharged; but first conciliated by the rewards which were bestowed upon such as had served their term of warfare. The first legion of marines was sent into Spain, to be there indulged with tranquillity and repose. The seventh and eleventh were sent back to their old quarters in Dalmatia and Pannonia. The thirteenth was kept in Italy and employed in erecting two amphitheatres, for Cæcina and Valens were preparing each a public combat of gladiators, the former at Cremona, the other at Bononia.

Disturbances amongst the troops of Vitellius.

Thus Vitellius separated and dispersed, without the least noise or disturbance, the disaffected troops which served under Otho; but had not authority sufficient to restrain the licentiousness of his own army. As the officers, and even the common soldiers, usually adopt the manners of their emperors, about Vitellius were seen only disorder, drunkenness, and all things more resembling nocturnal revellings, and the debauches of Bacchanals, than a Roman army, and military discipline. In this situation a tumult arose, which derived its beginning from matter of pastime, but was not quelled without much bloodshed. Two soldiers, one of the fifth legion, the other from amongst the auxiliary Gauls, having, while they sported together, provoked each other to wrestle, the legionary was overcome, and the Gaul triumphed over him with great scorn. This incident immediately divided those who had assembled only as spectators into two parties; insomuch that the soldiers of the legions falling
with

with fury upon the auxiliaries, put two cohorts to the sword: but this tumult was in the end composed by another; for dust and the glitter of arms being discerned at a distance, a general cry ran in an instant through the whole army, that the fourteenth legion had returned, and was approaching with hostile intent; for they were known to be disaffected to Vitellius. Hereupon they all joined to oppose the common enemy: their fear was soon allayed; for it proved the rear of their own army. However, as they met a slave belonging to Virginus, they charged him as one employed to assassinate Vitellius; and, rushing into the banqueting-room, insisted, that Virginus should be put to death: though Vitellius entertained not the least doubt about the innocence of Virginus, yet it was with the utmost difficulty that he prevailed upon the enraged soldiery to forbear shedding the blood of one who had borne the supreme dignity of consul, and been formerly their general.

Next day Vitellius gave audience to the ambassadors from the senate, at Ticinum, now Pavia; then he entered the camp of the victorious army, where he was received with loud shouts, and joyful acclamations. After he had commended the zeal and bravery of the conquering legions, and promised them their usual rewards, he sent back to their own country the eighteen Batavian cohorts, which had attended him in his journey, having found by experience, that they were altogether ungovernable. He likewise dismissed to their several territories all the auxiliary Gauls, who had been levied in the beginning of the war. At the same time, that the revenues of the empire, nearly exhausted, might be able to supply his extravagance, he ordered the number of men in the legions and auxiliaries to be reduced, put a stop to farther levies, and granted discharges to all who required them; which, to those who continued in the service, proved matter of great disgust, since upon them, now reduced to a few, rested all the military duties before shared amongst many.

He disbanded several troops.

From Ticinum the emperor took the route to Cremona, where he beheld the public sports, exhibited with extraordinary magnificence by Cæcina. While he was there, he conceived a desire of viewing the field at Bedriacum, and surveying the scene of the recent victory. As the battle had been fought not quite forty days before, the field was still covered with the bodies of the slain, torn and mangled limbs, carcases of horses and men putrefied, and the ground stained with corruption and gore; all the trees felled, the

He surveys the field of battle.

^a Tacit. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 65—69.

corn trod down, the whole exhibiting a shocking scene of cruelty, slaughter, and desolation. The emperor, however, persisted in his resolution, and with a great retinue set out for Bedriacum; the people of Cremona strewing the road with flowers and laurel, rearing altars, and sacrificing victims, even where the ghastly remains of their slaughtered countrymen were still to be seen. Cæcina and Valens accompanied him, and pointed out the scenes of every remarkable circumstance in the battle. Vitellius did not once turn his eyes from a spectacle so tragical, nor shewed the least horror at the sight of so many thousand Roman citizens slain and unburied: he even testified joy, and offered a pompous sacrifice to the tutelary gods of the place¹ (F). From Bedriacum, Vitellius pursued his route to Bononia; and the nearer he advanced to that place, his march proved the more disorderly and debauched. Amongst his military troops were blended bands of comedians and herds of eunuchs, agreeable to the genius of the court in Nero's reign; Vitellius always speaking of him with admiration and praise. At Bononia he assisted at the combat of gladiators exhibited by Valens, which was extremely pompous and magnificent, all the decorations of the entertainment having been brought from Rome. Before he departed from thence, that he might procure some vacant months to Valens and Cæcina, for exercising the consulship, he abridged the term appointed for others, and Valerius Marinus, nominated consul by Galba, he postponed to a farther time, for no offence given, but because Valerius would submit to any injury.

*His army
let them-
selves loose
to spoil and
ravage.*

As he was on his march from Bononia, he received letters from his friends in Syria and Judæa, informing him, that the provinces in the East had taken the oath of fidelity to him. As he dreaded Vespasian, and upon the very mention of his name was frequently observed to start, he no sooner received these tidings, than both he and his army, having now no rival power to fear, abandoned themselves to all the excesses of cruelty, lust, and rapine. In all the great towns through which he passed, every pleasure, and every diversion, proved an allurements to stop his progress.

¹ Tacit. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 70, 71.

(F) Suetonius writes, that some of his train being offended with the stench of the half-putrefied bodies, the emperor was so imprudent as to tell them, "A dead enemy smells well, but a dead citizen better;" evidently betraying by that impious saying, his natural turn to cruelty and bloodshed.

He

He entered the cities in triumph, and was rowed down the rivers in painted gallies, curiously adorned with garlands of flowers, and plentifully stored with the most exquisite delicacies, and incentives to gluttony. He was accompanied by threefold thousand armed men, a greater number of retainers to the camp, and an immense multitude of buffoons, mimics, players, singers, and charioteers. Among these there was no order or discipline; nay, their rapine and daily tumults, however insupportable, proved to the emperor matter of sport and diversion. Hence, not satisfied with free-quarters wherever they came, they enfranchised slaves, plundered the houses of their hosts, insulted their wives and children, and, where any resistance was offered, beat, wounded, and killed at their pleasure; for though they were constantly quarreling among themselves, yet, in contesting with the peasants, they were always unanimous. Not only the colonies, villages, and municipal cities, were consumed by furnishing such vast supplies of provision; but as the grain was then ripe, the lands were stripped and laid waste. As the emperor approached Rome, the crowd, great in itself, was increased by the arrival of the senators and Roman knights, who came out to meet the emperor; a compliment which some paid out of fear, others out of flattery. When the multitude was within seven miles of Rome, Vitellius caused a quantity of meat ready dressed to be distributed amongst his soldiers, to every man his portion, as if he had been fattening a number of gladiators.

In the mean time, the populace, who came in crowds to the camp, and were scattered all over it, while the soldiers regarded them not, cut and conveyed away their belts without being perceived; which, it seems, was a joke in great vogue with the rabble of the city. The soldiers, who were strangers to such tricks, and could not brook them, upon being asked by way of derision, what was become of their belts, ran to arms, and with their drawn swords falling upon the defenceless multitude, slaughtered great numbers; a circumstance which occasioned a general alarm and consternation in the city. When the tumult in the camp was composed, Vitellius, mounted upon a stately courser, and in his coat of armour, with his sword by his side, began to advance to the gates of the city, ordering the senate and people to march before him. Being advised by his friends not to enter the city in his warlike dress, as if it had been taken by storm, he put on the senatorial robe, and made an entry altogether orderly and pacific, surrounded with

The populace of Rome slaughtered by the soldiery.

The emperor's entry into Rome.

standards and colours, and followed by his numerous army^k. In this state he went to the Capitol, to offer sacrifice to Jupiter; and there finding his mother Sextilia, embraced and honoured her with the title of Augusta. From the Capitol, he marched in the same pomp to the imperial palace. The next day he assembled the senate, and made a speech, in which he promised extraordinary advantages from his administration, uttered high and pompous things of himself, and chiefly enlarged upon his temperance, though all Italy had seen him, during his march, wallowing in voluptuousness, and continually intoxicated with wine. The thoughtless multitude, however, broke out into loud acclamations, and pressed upon him the title of Augustus, which, though formerly rejected, he now assumed. He likewise took upon him the office of chief pontiff; but was so ignorant of the religious rites, that on the eighteenth of July, he published an edict concerning the celebration of certain solemnities, though that day had been always held unlucky, because on it had happened the tragical overthrows at Cremera and Allia.

His conduct.

His chief study was to gain the good graces and applause of the rabble. With this view he frequented the theatre and circus, exhibited public shews, and did all that lay in his power to keep them in good humour. He went often to the senate, even when the deliberations were about things of small moment. In the room of the prætorian cohorts, which he had discharged, he raised sixteen new ones, and four city cohorts, each containing a thousand chosen men. For captains of the prætorian guards, he appointed Publius Sabinus, raised from the command of a cohort, and Julius Priscus, then only a centurion. Priscus owed his preferment to the interest of Valens, and Sabinus his to Cæcina; for by these two favourites all the functions of sovereignty were discharged, and no portion of power was left Vitellius. They strove to excel each other in credit and authority, in magnificence, in the number of attendants and dependents; and hence were ever at variance with one another, their ancient and mutual hatred, which, even during the war, had been ill-disguised, being inflamed by the malignity of their several friends. However, their animosity did not render them more remiss in seizing for themselves fine houses and gardens, and the wealth of the empire. Asiaticus too, formerly the emperor's pathic, and now his freedman, had a great share in the administration; for before four months

His favourites usurp all the power.

^k Tacit. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 87—89.

were elapsed, he is said to have equalled in wealth all the freedmen of former emperors.

Vitellius abandoned the functions of an emperor, resigning himself entirely to riot, luxury, and gluttony. In his court no man strove to rise by virtue or ability. One only road there was to preferment, namely, by means of consuming banquets, to gorge the appetite of the emperor, ever craving, and never satiated. He eat constantly three, and often four and five meals a day, having brought himself to a habit of discharging his stomach by vomiting when he pleased. All his meals were expensive almost beyond belief, but not always at his own charge; for he frequently invited himself to the houses of his friends, to breakfast in one place, to dine in another, and to sup in a third, all on the same day. He was every where entertained in a most sumptuous and expensive manner: but of all these entertainments the most memorable was made for him by Lucius his brother; in which, if Suetonius¹ and Eutropius² are to be credited, two thousand different dishes of fish, and seven thousand of fowl, were served up; the choicest of both sorts that the sea and land afforded. His own profuseness fell not much short of his brother's at the dedication of a charger, which, by reason of its capacity, he termed the target of Minerva. It was nevertheless filled with the livers of the fish called scari, the brains of pheasants and peacocks, the tongues of birds called phoenixopteri, and the small guts of lampries brought from the Carpathian Sea, and the farthestmost coasts of Spain. As he judged it sufficient to enjoy present pleasures, without troubling himself about future events, he squandered away in banquets above seven millions of our money in four months³; and Josephus asserts, that if he had reigned long, the whole wealth of the empire would not have been sufficient to supply the expences of his table. Besides the vast sums he consumed by his riotous living, he erected at a great charge stables for the use of charioteers, exhibited almost daily shews in the circus, combats in the theatre and amphitheatre, and wantonly scattered his treasures in every kind of expence. Nothing gave greater disgust to the virtuous, though it proved matter of joy to the profligate and debauched, than his solemnizing with great pomp in the Field of Mars the obsequies of Nero, and obliging the Augustal priests, an order by Tiberius consecrated to the Julian family, to assist at that ceremony.

His gluttony and profuseness.

¹ Suet. in Vit. cap. 13.
Hist. lib. ii. cap. 95.

² Eutrop. p. 720.

³ Tacit.

While

*The state of
affairs in
the East.*

While Vitellius thus wasted the wealth of the empire in voluptuousness, fortune, or rather Providence, was raising him a competitor in a distant part of the world. Vespasian had been sent by Nero with three legions, and a considerable number of auxiliaries, to make war upon the Jews, which war he was carrying on with great success, when news arrived of the death of that prince, and the accession of Galba to the empire. He immediately dispatched his son Titus to pay homage to the new emperor, and to receive his orders concerning the prosecution of the war. But obtaining upon his arrival at Corinth, advice of the murder of Galba, and at the same time understanding, that Vitellius had taken up arms, and designed to dispute the empire with Otho, he resolved to return to Judæa, to receive farther instructions from his father. Having therefore left Greece, he steered his course to the island of Rhodes, from whence he proceeded to Cyprus, and thence to Syria. In the island of Cyprus his curiosity prompted him to visit the temple of Venus at Paphos, which was at that time highly renowned amongst the natives as well as foreigners. After he had surveyed the signal wealth of the temple, the donations of princes, and other curiosities, he consulted the oracle first concerning the security of his voyage, and then proposed, but in vague terms, questions concerning himself. The priest named Sostratus, returned him in public a short answer, but desired a secret interview, wherein he disclosed to him his future grandeur. He proceeded to his father; but before his arrival the armies in the East had already sworn fidelity to Otho. In Judæa, three legions were under the command of Vespasian; men thoroughly exercised in war. Mucianus governed Syria at the head of four legions.

*Vespasian
and Mu-
cianus en-
ter into an
alliance.*

Between these two commanders, as they ruled in two bordering provinces, great animosities had reigned; which, however, they dropped upon the death of Nero, and agreed to act in concert for their mutual security and interest. This union was first begun by the interposition of their common friends, and afterwards accomplished by Titus. Into the same confederacy entered the tribunes, the centurions, and by degrees the common soldiers, who, upon hearing that Otho and Vitellius were contending for the empire, began to complain, that while others enjoyed rewards for bestowing the empire, they alone were doomed slaves to every emperor. The ardour of the soldiery was well known to the generals; but they judged proper to wait the issue of the war between Otho and Vitellius: even after Otho's death, Vespasian took the usual oath to Vitellius, and with-

ed

ed him a prosperous reign in presence of his army, as a precedent for them to follow. His troops heard him with disgust and silence, and were not without great difficulty prevailed upon to take the same oath, thinking themselves no less able to create and support an emperor than the German legions or the prætorian bands. They amounted to seven legions, with numerous auxiliaries, and the two provinces of Syria and Judæa were in their possession: to them lay contiguous that of Egypt, which was governed by Tiberius Alexander, by birth an Egyptian, at the head of two legions. Several bodies of forces were quartered in Cappadocia and Pontus, upon the frontiers of Armenia, in Asia, and the other provinces. The governor of Egypt, who was entirely attached to Vespasian, accounted the third legion, then in Mœsia, at his devotion, since it had been transposed thither out of Egypt: hopes too were entertained, that the other legions in Illyricum would espouse the same interest. Vespasian continued still in suspense, reflecting how dangerous it was to throw himself, at the age of sixty, and his two sons, Titus and Domitian, in the prime of their years, upon the caprice of fortune, and the fate of war: in private pursuits, room was always left for retreat; but to those who grasp at the sovereignty, no middle lot remains; they must either reign or perish. At the same time he had before his eyes the great strength of the German army; a circumstance perfectly known to him, who was a man of great experience in war. He yielded at length to the solicitations of Mucianus, and the other officers, promising to assume the title of emperor, when a proper opportunity should offer. The two commanders, after having spent several days in private conferences, parted, Mucianus going to Antioch, and Vespasian to Cæsarea; the former the metropolis of Syria, the latter of Judæa.

In the mean time, Alexandria set the example of acknowledging Vespasian for emperor, through the zeal of Tiberius Alexander, who brought the legions there to swear allegiance to him on the first of July, the day ever afterwards kept and solemnized as the first of his reign. The army in Judæa took the same oath on the third of July, with such ardour, that they would not wait the arrival of Titus, who was then on his return from Syria, where he had been concerting measures with Mucianus. These glad tidings no sooner reached Mucianus, than he administered to his soldiers, who were themselves well disposed, the oath to Vespasian. Before the fifteenth of July, the whole province of Syria had taken the same oath. To the party acceded Sohemus, king of Edeffa, Antiochus, king of Co-magene,

*Vespasian
proclaimed
emperor.*

magene, and Agrippa, king of Iturea, who was returned with great expedition from Rome, upon private intelligence conveyed to him by his friends concerning the transactions in the East. Allegiance was likewise sworn by all the maritime provinces, extending to Asia and Achaia, and by all the inland regions bordering upon Pontus, and the two Armenias.^o

He establishes a council at Berytus.

His preparations for war.

Vespasian, having now assumed the imperial authority, established in the first place, at Berytus in Phœnicia, a council for the direction of all important affairs. Thither repaired Mucianus, with a train of general officers, tribunes, and such centurions and private men as made a distinguished appearance. The army in Judæa furnished a great number of principal officers, who, while they strove to surpass each other in pomp and parade, contributed to the splendid appearance of the court, and grandeur of the emperor. The first step taken for prosecuting the war, was to insist men, and to recall the dismissed veterans to the service. Fortified cities were allotted for forging arms. At Antioch money was coined, gold and silver. All these undertakings were, in their several quarters, diligently dispatched by careful and capable inspectors. To the kings of Parthia and Armenia, Vologeses, and his brother Tiridates, were sent as ambassadors; and at the same time provision was made, that when the legions were withdrawn to prosecute the civil war, the countries behind should not be left naked and defenceless. It was resolved, in a council of all the chief officers, that Titus should prosecute the war in Judæa, Vespasian seize the streights leading into Egypt, and Mucianus, with part of the forces, encounter Vitellius. To all the generals and armies letters were sent, with orders to invite to arms the prætorian soldiers who had been disbanded by Vitellius. Mucianus, at the head of the sixth legion, and thirteen thousand veterans, began his march, acting rather like a colleague, than a minister of the emperor. He took his route through Cappadocia and Phrygia to Byzantium, where he had ordered the fleet to attend him. He loaded the countries through which he passed with exorbitant taxes, for which the urgent necessities of war furnished an excuse. From his own treasure he helped to support the war; thus liberal of a private sum, which he was sure to repay himself with usury out of the public. The rest contributed after his example; but few were found who recovered their share.

The Illyrian army, upon advice that the legions in the East had declared Vespasian emperor, espoused the same

* Tacit. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 72—81, 83, 84. Suet. Vesp. cap. 9. Joseph. Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 36, 40.

party with extraordinary zeal. The third legion, then in Mœsia, was the foremost; the eighth, and the seventh intitled Claudiana, followed the example of the third, being both devoted to Vespasian, though they had not been in the last battle. They had indeed advanced as far as Aquileia, and there hearing melancholy tidings of Otho, insulted those who brought them, rent the standards bearing the name of Vitellius, and sharing the public money amongst themselves, acted with open hostility. Hence, considering that they might urge to Vespasian these acts of violence as matter of service and merit, whereas they must expect to be punished for them by Vitellius, they not only declared for the former, but by letters induced the army in Pannonia to join in the confederacy, and were preparing to have recourse to force, if they refused. In Pannonia the thirteenth legion, and the seventh, called after the name of Galba, acceded without hesitation to the cause of Vespasian, chiefly instigated by Antonius Primus; who finding that Vespasian was likely to prevail, abandoned Vitellius, devoted himself to the new emperor, and proved a great accession to the cause; for he was a man of tried bravery, daring and enterprising, a ready speaker, powerful in popular tumults; and, though rapacious, profuse, and in peace altogether wicked and corrupt, yet very useful in war. The Mœsian and Pannonian armies drew after them the forces in Dalmatia. Into Britain two dispatches were sent to the fourteenth legion, others into Spain to the first; for they had both engaged for Otho against Vitellius. At the same time letters were dispersed over all the territories of the Gauls.

The Illyrian army declares for Vespasian;

and the Pannonian legions.

Vitellius was first informed of the revolt of the third legion in Mœsia; which intelligence was conveyed to him by Aponius Saturninus, who commanded in that province; but the circumstances were much softened and qualified. The emperor's friends, soothing him with flattering speeches, took care to put favourable constructions upon the disagreeable intelligence. Vitellius himself, in an harangue to the soldiers, inveighed against the prætorians lately discharged, as if they had published lying reports, and assured both the soldiery and people, that there was no ground to fear a civil war. He took care to suppress the name of Vespasian, and dispersed soldiers all over the city, with directions to silence the murmurs of the populace; a precaution which greatly increased the public alarm. From Germany, from Britain, and from both Spains, he sent for succours, but in a very neg-

Vitellius hears of the revolt.

Sends for succours.

† Tacit. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 25—27. Suet. cap. 18. Dio, lib. lxxviii. P. 737.

*Africa
faithful to
him.*

*Measures
agreed on
by Vespasian
and
Mucianus.*

*Antonius
Primus is
for invading
Italy
with the
Illyrian
army.*

ligent manner, the better to conceal the necessity of his affairs. In the provinces, and commanders of the provinces, no less remissness was found: Hordeonius Flaccus, who commanded in Germany, and Vettius Bolanus, governor of Britain, wavered in their fidelity to Vitellius; nor in Spain was there any forwardness or expedition shewn, the commanders of the three legions there, men equal in authority, watching the fortune of war, and being ready to follow it which way soever it might turn. In Africa, the legion and cohort levied by Claudius Macer, and afterwards discharged by Galba, upon orders from Vitellius, returned to the service. The youth of the province offered to insist with signal alacrity, Vitellius having ruled there as proconsul with great uprightness, as had Vespasian in the same quality with ignominy and public hatred. Valerius Festus, governor of the province, promoted at first the inclinations of the people with exemplary zeal; but soon after beginning to waver, while he asserted in public the cause of Vitellius, by secret intelligence encouraged that of Vespasian, resolved, whatever party prevailed, to maintain the justice of the stronger^d.

The measures concerted and agreed on by Vespasian and Mucianus were, that the Illyrian army should advance as far as Aquileia, possess themselves of the Pannonian Alps, and there wait, till their forces from all quarters behind them came up, in order to enter Italy the following year in a large body. In the mean time the fleet was to keep constantly cruising both in the Mediterranean and Adriatic seas, in order to prevent the conveying of corn from Egypt to Rome, and provisions from Achaia or Sicily. By these means they did not doubt that Italy would be obliged to submit without bloodshed: but these orders did not reach the Illyrian army, till it was too late to put them in execution; for the leaders of Vespasian's party in Illyrium having held a council at Petovio, now Pettaw in Stiria upon the Drave, to deliberate whether they should content themselves with guarding the passes of the Pannonian Alps, till the forces left behind advanced, or, by a resolution more daring, march forward, and venture a struggle for Italy, some thought it adviseable to wait the arrival of succours, magnifying the same and renown of the German legions; but Antonius Primus, who was against all delay, argued, that to themselves dispatch was altogether advantageous, and to Vitellius only pernicious; since the German legions, once indeed formidable, were, by frequenting the circus and theatres, and following the idle diversions of the

^d Tacit. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 96—98.

city, at present utterly enervated and debauched, and dreadful to none, but their hosts; whereas if time were allowed them, their ancient vigour would return, by their application to the cares and toils of war. "Not far from them (added he) lies Germany; beyond the channel, Britain; just by, Gaul, as also both Spains; from all a ready supply of men, horses, and contributions. Italy itself is in their possession, with the immense treasures of Rome. The protracting of the war, therefore, to another summer, will prove highly advantageous to them; but in this interval where shall we find provisions? where money? Let us therefore instantly make an irruption into the boundaries of Italy. The measures which I advise I am resolved to pursue. You, who are yet free to follow fortune on either side, stay, and with you detain the legion. To me a few cohorts, lightly equipped, will be sufficient. You shall soon hear that I have opened my way into Italy, and broken the power of Vitellius: you will then be glad to follow the track of one who has conquered for you."

This speech, uttered with eyes darting fire, and a fierce and thundering voice, animated even the most cautious and wary. The common soldiers, who, together with the centurions, had slipped into the council, extolled him as the only brave man, the only resolute leader. His resolution being generally approved of, to render the march into Italy secure, letters were forthwith dispatched to Aponius Saturninus, who had already joined the party of Vespasian, with directions to follow in haste with his army from Mœsia. That the provinces, thus bereft of their armies, might not be exposed to the incursions of the bordering nations, the chiefs of the Iazyges, a Sarmatian nation, were taken into the service, and retained in pay. Into the party were drawn Sido and Italicus, kings of the Suevians, men remarkable for their attachment and fidelity to the Romans. On the side towards Rhætia guards of auxiliaries were posted, that country being governed by Portius Septimius, the procurator, a man unshaken in his fidelity to Vitellius. Sentilius Felix was ordered to possess himself of the bank of Oenus, now the Ins, flowing between Rhætia and Noricum. These precautions being taken, Primus marched with great expedition to invade Italy, at the head of a chosen body of infantry and cavalry. He was accompanied by Arrius Varus, an officer of great bravery and experience, which he had acquired under the renowned Corbulo, whom he was supposed, in secret conferences with Nero, to have accused, and thereby occasioned the ruin of that

His proposal approved.

*He seizes
Aquileia,
and several other
cities.*

that celebrated commander. By favour thus infamously gained, he was raised to the rank of a principal centurion.

Primus and Varus, advancing to Aquileia, were admitted into the city, and likewise into the neighbouring towns of Opitergium and Altinum: Padua, and Abeste, now Este, received them with great demonstrations of joy. In the latter place they learned, that three cohorts of Vitellius's army, with the squadron of horse called Scriboniana, had constructed a bridge at Forum Allienum, now Ferrara, where they were posted. At break of day therefore this body was surprised, some of them put to the sword, and the rest either obliged to save themselves by flight, or to renounce their allegiance. In the mean time two legions arriving at Padua from Pannonia, namely, the seventh, surnamed Galbiana, and the thirteenth, named Gemina, Primus, after having allowed them a few days for repose, directed his march to Verona, with a design to seize that city, and make it the seat of war, as it was situated among spacious plains, fit for encounters of horse, in which his principal force lay. In their march they became masters of Vicetia; an acquisition which, though small in itself, passed for one of great moment; since in it Cæcina was born, and from the general of the enemy the place of his nativity was snatched. The seizing of Verona was deemed a more important conquest; for it was a wealthy and flourishing city, and besides, the key of Germany and Rhætia: so that now all communication between Vitellus and those countries was cut off. In the mean time letters arrived from Vespasian, with orders to his generals not to venture beyond Aquileia, but to wait the arrival of Mucianus. Mucianus was impelled by a passion for gaining all the glory, and reserving for himself the whole honour of the war: but from distant quarters of the world these counsels arrived, when other measures were already taken.

Takes Verona.

*Vitellius
orders Cæcina and
Valens to
take the
field.*

*Bad condition of the
German
army.*

Intelligence of the irruption of the enemy into Italy no sooner reached Rome, than Vitellius, at length thoroughly alarmed, ordered his two generals, Cæcina and Valens, to prepare with all expedition for taking the field. New levies were raised, and volunteers were enlisted on promise of being dismissed immediately after the service, and gratified with the same rewards that were bestowed on veterans after a long course of warfare. As Valens was just then recovered from a severe fit of sickness, Cæcina alone was placed at the head of the German army. The appearance

* Tacit. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 1—5.

of those forces, so dreadful upon their late entry, proved far different upon their departure : they had, by imitating the excesses of their emperor, by abandoning themselves to the voluptuous entertainments of the city, and following other practices too abominable to be named, quite exhausted their martial ardour, and enfeebled their bodies. Their march was disorderly and slow, their ranks were thin, great numbers having been swept off by distempers arising from their riotous living ; their horses were almost lifeless, and the men grown too delicate to bear the sun, the dust, or the weather : but the more averse they were to military toils, the greater propensity they had to disobedience and mutiny.

It was generally believed, that Cæcina, who commanded them, out of jealousy and hatred to Fabius Valens, Vitellius's chief favourite, had already resolved to change sides, and signified his intention to Flavius Sabinus, Vespasian's brother, whom Vitellius had not yet removed from the government of Rome. Cæcina, after Vitellius had embraced and dismissed him with high marks of honour, leaving the city, detached part of the cavalry to possess themselves of Cremona, ordering the rest to repair to Hostilia, a place of some strength, about thirty miles from Verona. He himself turned off to Ravenna, to confer with Lucius Bassus, who, from the command of a squadron of horse, had been preferred by Vitellius at once to that of the two fleets, the one riding at Ravenna, the other at Misenum ; but was nevertheless highly dissatisfied, because he was not appointed captain of the prætorian guards. Cæcina having rejoined the legions, employed many devices to alienate the affections of the centurions and common soldiers from Vitellius, to whom they were strongly devoted. Bassus undertook the same task with the fleet, and accomplished it without much difficulty ; for as they had lately served under Otho, they were ready to throw off their allegiance to Vitellius. Cæcina advanced to Hostilia, and encamped between that village and the marshes formed by the river Tartarus, being defended behind by the river, and on each side by the marsh. As he had with him six legions, and a great number of auxiliaries, it was in his power to have utterly defeated Primus's two legions (for his other forces were not yet arrived), and to have forced them to abandon Italy : but framing delays, he privately carried on a correspondence with the enemy's generals, till, by intercourse of messengers, he agreed upon the articles of his treachery. In the mean time the seventh legion, named Claudiana, arrived at Verona, under the command of Vipsanius Messala, a man of a most illustrious family, and the only person who engaged

*Cæcina
wavers in
his fidelity.*

*His treach-
ery.*

in the war from laudable designs. The seventh legion was soon after followed by the third and the eighth; and then it was judged proper to draw an entrenchment round Verona.

*The fleet at
Ravenna
declares for
Vespasian.*

*Cæcina
revolts,*

*and is by
his troops
put in irons.*

In the mean time the fleet at Ravenna revolting from Vitellius, destroyed his images, and openly espoused the cause of Vespasian; a revolt which Cæcina no sooner understood, than, assembling all the principal centurions, and some of the common soldiers, he represented the deplorable condition of Vitellius's affairs, exhorted them to gain betimes the favour of the new prince, and then persuaded them to take the oath to Vespasian. Those who were his accomplices setting an example, the rest, astonished at so sudden an event, took it after them. At the same instant, the images of Vitellius were pulled down and defaced, and messengers dispatched to acquaint Antonius Primus with the whole transaction. As soon as news of the defection were spread through the camp, the soldiers flocked to the quarter where the images of Vespasian were set up, and, with the utmost indignation, flung them down, and replaced those of Vitellius; then choosing for their leaders Fabius Fabullus, commander of the fifth legion, and Cassius Longus, præfect of the camp, they put Cæcina in irons, cutting in pieces many marines, who, by chance, fell in their way. Finally, they abandoned their camp, and breaking down the bridge, marched back to Hostilia, and thence to Cremona, to rejoin the first legion named Italica, and the one-and-twentieth, surnamed Rapax *.

These transactions were no sooner known to Primus than he resolved to attack the enemy, thus divided in their sentiments, before the leaders had recovered their authority, the soldiers their discipline and obedience, or the legions their former spirit and boldness. He imagined, that Fabius Valens, who was inviolably attached to Vitellius, and a commander of great experience, had before this time left Rome, and would, upon learning the desertion of Cæcina, advance with great expedition. With his whole army therefore he departed from Verona, and the next evening encamped at Bedriacum. The day following he ordered his auxiliaries to forage in the territories of Cremona, and marched himself at the head of eight thousand horse to support them. When he had advanced about eight miles from Bedriacum, he received intelligence that the enemy approached. While Primus was consulting what measures to take, Arrius Varus rushed out with a party of the most resolute horse, and put

* Tacit. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 7—14.

the enemy's vanguard in confusion : but others advancing to support their comrades, the fortune of the encounter changed, and Arrius was put to flight. This rash step had been taken without the approbation of Primus, who judged that the issue would be such as it proved. He now exhorted those about him to prepare for battle ; to the legions he dispatched orders to arm, and notice to the auxiliaries, dispersed over the country, to abandon their pillage, and hasten by the several nearest ways to the action. In the mean time Arrius's routed troops arriving, communicated their panic to the rest ; insomuch that the whole body of horse, under the command of Primus, fled in a shameful manner. During this consternation, Primus discharged the duty of an experienced commander, and a most intrepid soldier, animating such as were dismayed, readily assisting with his sword wherever the greatest efforts were required, wherever any hope was presented. With his javelin he pierced a standard-bearer who was flying, and seizing the banner, turned it against the enemy. Hereupon a hundred horse, ashamed to desert their general, returned to the charge. With these, drawn up in close ranks, he sustained the onset, till the rest of his men, finding the bridge behind them broken, and their flight interrupted, returned to battle.

Arrius Varus put to flight by the troops of Vitellius.

The gallant conduct of Primus.

Consternation and dismay now seized the enemy ; they began to give ground, and at last, Primus pressing them with fresh vigour, they fled in great disorder. The conquerors pursued them within four miles of Cremona, where they met, attacked, and routed the two legions, called Rapax and Italica, who were advancing to the relief of their cavalry. Primus forbore pursuing them, attentive to the condition of his men and horses, quite exhausted with the fatigue of the day. In the close of the evening, the rest of the forces commanded by Primus arrived. As they marched over heaps of slain, they concluded from thence, that the war was nearly ended, and demanded to be led directly to Cremona, well apprised, that by storming the town in the dark they should have a greater latitude for plundering ; whereas, if they waited the return of day, proposals would be offered, and terms granted : by which means the wealth of Cremona would accrue to the commanders of the legions, and principal officers ; for the plunder of a town, taken by storm, belonged to the soldiers ; but to the leaders, when gained by surrender. It was with the utmost difficulty that Primus (for they disregarded the other commanders) prevailed upon them to delay the attack for one night. In the mean time some horsemen,

Vitellius's cavalry routed.

*The battle
of Cre-
mona.*

who had advanced close to the walls of Cremona, having seized a few stragglers, learned of them, that six legions of Vitellius, and the whole army which had encamped at Hostilia, having that day marched thirty miles, were just approaching in order of battle. Primus immediately drew up his men, according to the nature of the ground, and made the necessary preparations to receive the enemy, who, as they wanted a leader of experience, instead of resting at Cremona, resolved, fatigued as they were, to attack the forces of Primus, and actually began the engagement at the third hour of the night; that is, about nine in the evening.

The combat lasted the whole night, fortune sometimes favouring one side, sometimes another. As they fought in the dark, and the watch-word of each, by being frequently asked and repeated, became known to the other, they could not discern friend from foe. In this dreadful confusion the seventh legion, called Galbiana, was severely handled. Out of it six centurions of principal rank were slain, and some of the ensigns taken: the eagle, however, was preserved by Attilius Verus, the chief centurion, who, in defending it, slew heaps of the enemy, and at last was slain. The troops of Primus were chiefly annoyed by a balista of amazing bulk, which being placed in the middle of the highway, swept away whole ranks, by discharging against them massy stones. At length two common soldiers, passing undiscovers through the midst of the enemy, cut the springs of the engines, and thus, at the expence of their own lives (for they were immediately cut in pieces), saved part of the army from destruction. To neither side was fortune yet inclining, when the moon rising discovered the two armies to each other. More favourable, however, she proved to that of Vespasian, as she shone upon their backs, and full in the enemy's faces. Primus, now that he could distinguish his own men, and be by them distinguished, exerted all his endeavours to animate them by force of applause, reproach, and exhortation. In the midst of these efforts the third legion, according to the custom in Syria, where they had been long quartered, paid their adoration to the rising sun. This incident gave birth to a report, which flew in an instant through the whole army, and reached the enemy, that Mucianus was arrived, and between his forces and the third legion mutual salutations had passed. The troops of Vitellius were greatly disheartened by this report; when Primus, seizing the occasion, pushed them with redoubled vigour, and entirely broke their ranks; which they attempted indeed to restore, but in vain, being embarrassed by their own carriages and engines.

Being

• Being therefore no longer able to keep their ground, they fled with precipitation, and strove to gain Cremona; the victors pursuing them with great slaughter. Vitellius is said to have lost, in the engagement and pursuit, about thirty thousand men (G). *Vitellius's army defeated.*

As the conquerors approached Cremona, they found the enemy encamped quite round the walls, defended by a deep ditch, which had been dug in the war against Otho, and since strengthened with fresh works. To proceed to the assault with an army exhausted with the continued toil of a day and a night, seemed to the leaders an enterprize full of danger and difficulty; but the soldiers, more inclined to brave perils than to bear delays, demanded to be forthwith led on to the attack. Primus, yielding to this humour, ordered them, in the form of a ring, to invest the entrenchments, and begin the assault; which they gave with a fury hardly to be expressed, raising their shields over their heads, and thence forming a testudo, under the shelter of which they advanced to the foot of the ramparts. But Vitellius's men, by hurling down huge stones, loosened the testudo, beat to the ground the men beneath, and made a dreadful havock of them, thus naked and exposed to volleys of stones and arrows. The onset began to slacken, when the officers, *They attack the enemy's camp,*

(G) The sight of so many dead bodies lying together in heaps, and covering the fields and highways, did not occasion so much horror as the death of a father slaughtered by his own son. The fact is thus related by our historian, upon the authority of Vipsanius Messala, who, in this engagement, commanded the seventh legion, named Claudiana: Julius Mansuetus, a native of Spain, listing in the legion called Rapax, left behind him a son, then a boy, who afterwards being under Galba, inrolled in the seventh legion called Galbiana, happened in this battle to engage his father, and killed him; but being known by his parent just expiring, as he was rising him, and recognizing him at the same time, he embraced with a flood of tears, his pale corpse; charged, with a mournful voice, the public with the crime of parricide; and lifting up the body, digged a grave, and under the utmost affliction, discharged towards his parent the last duty. Those who were nearest observed what passed, and in a moment the tragical accident was divulged throughout the whole army, with many lamentations and bitter execrations, upon a war thus unnatural and barbarous; yet they continued to butcher and plunder their kinsmen, their relations, nay, their brethren, at the same time relating what a crying iniquity had been committed, and committing it themselves (3).

(3) Tacit. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 13—15. Dio, lib. lxxv. p. 740.

*and force
it.*

finding their men unmoved by exhortations, pointed to Cremona as the price of their victory. Thus encouraged, they renewed the assault, all obstinately determined to succeed or die : regardless of wounds and blood they strove to demolish the rampart, battered the gates, stood upon the shoulders of one another, and upon the testudo now restored ; thence seized the weapons in the hands of the enemy, and the hands too which held them ; so that the wounded and unwounded, such as were half dead, and such as were just expiring, tumbled headlong together, and perished. When the troops of Vitellius were no longer able to sustain the shock, and found that all the discharges from the balista were rendered ineffectual by the testudo below, they at last flung down the engine itself, huge and ponderous as it was, which failed not to crush those upon whom it fell ; but at the same time drew with it the battlements, the upper part of the rampart, and the adjoining tower. In this confusion Caius Volusius, a soldier of the third legion, having mounted the rampart, bore down all who resisted, and cried aloud that the camp was taken. The rest then having broken the gate with their swords and axes, rushed in, the enemy being repulsed, and leaping with great precipitation from the battlements. The whole space between the camp and Cremona, whither the enemy retired, was covered with dead bodies.

*Cremona
attacked.*

Here was presented a new scene of difficulties. The city was surrounded by high walls, and strong towers of stone, and the gates were secured by vast bars of iron, the garrison numerous, the inhabitants devoted to the party of Vitellius, and at this time a great part of Italy assembled in the town on occasion of a fair. Primus ordered fire to be immediately set to the most sumptuous and beautiful buildings in the neighbourhood of the city, hoping, by that expedient to oblige the people of Cremona to abandon the party of Vitellius. At the same time he conveyed all his bravest men into such houses as stood near the fortifications, from whence, with volleys of darts, arrows, and stones, they drove away all who made opposition, while the legions, forming a testudo, advanced to the foot of the walls. The besieged sustained the attack with great intrepidity, till their officers fearing that, should the city be taken by storm, all the fury of the conquerors would discharge itself upon them, began to deliberate about surrendering. Having therefore agreed to throw themselves on the mercy of the conquering army, they erased the name, and defaced the images of Vitellius ; then discharging Cæcina from confinement, besought him to intercede in their behalf. Thus were so many

many brave men reduced at length to implore the aid and protection of a traitor. At his request Primus granted them their lives, ordering them to lay down their arms, and march out of the town; Cæcina, who was then consul, walking before them, attended by his lictors, and arrayed with the ensigns of the consular dignity. This spectacle even the conquerors could not bear: they upbraided him in bitter terms with his pride, cruelty, and treason, and would have proceeded to violence, had not Primus restrained them; then furnishing Cæcina with a guard, sent him away to Vespasian¹.

It surrenders.

As the city of Cremona had, even in the war against Otho, supported the cause of Vitellius, and even shewed a passionate zeal for his interest, Primus and his army were highly incensed against it: nevertheless, the general did not think it adviseable to deliver it immediately up to be plundered, great part of the wealth of Italy being at this time lodged there, on occasion of the fair. In a speech which he made to the soldiers, after the surrender of the place, he commended their bravery, exhorted them to use mercy towards their fellow-soldiers who had submitted; but purposely avoided making any mention of the city or its inhabitants. Having ended his harangue, and dismissed his troops, he went to a bath to wash off the blood with which he was still stained; for he had, during the several engagements and attacks, commanded as a general, and fought like a common soldier. In the bath he happened to drop a word, which was remarked, and quickly divulged; for finding the water too cool, he complained of it, adding, "It will soon prove abundantly hot." This saying, though in jest, uttered to his slaves, was instantly spread all over the camp, and by the soldiery, greedy of plunder, interpreted as the watch-word for setting fire to Cremona. Accordingly forty thousand soldiers rushing into it, and a greater number of servants and retainers to the camp, more abandoned to acts of cruelty and licentiousness than the soldiers themselves, pillaged, murdered, and ravished, without restraint, for four days together, and then setting fire to the deserted houses, reduced them to ashes.

Is pillaged and burnt.

Such was the fate of Cremona, two hundred and eighty-six years after its foundation. Primus, incensed at the barbarities committed by his soldiers, commanded, that no one should presume to hold captive any citizen of Cremona. In consequence of this order, those who had any began to murder them; which inhumanity obliged their relations to redeem them. Soon after, the inhabitants that had

Great barbarities committed in Cremona.

¹ Tacit. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 16—31.

outlived the general massacre, returned to Cremona, and rebuilt the city, being assisted by Vespasian. Josephus tells us, that of Vitellius's party there fell in the battle thirty thousand two hundred, and four thousand five hundred on Primus's side"; and Xiphilinus writes, that in the field and in the city of Cremona, fifty thousand persons perished. The conquerors, not able to bear the stench of the putrefied carcases, having lodged one night on the ruins in which the city was buried, retired next day three miles from thence. The soldiers of Vitellius, scattered and dispersed over the country, were assembled again, placed under their former banners, and, as the war still subsisted, sent into Illyricum. Messengers were immediately dispatched into Britain, and both Spains, to acquaint the troops there with the victory, as was Julius Calenus, a tribune, into Gaul, and Alpinus Montanus, commander of a cohort, into Germany, two officers chosen for ostentation, as the latter was of Treves, the former an Æduan, and both partisans of Vitellius. At the same time guards were posted upon the passes of the Alps, to cut off all communication between Germany and Italy; for it was reported that the Germans were arming, with a design to assist the vanquished party".

Vitellius resigns himself up to voluptuousness.

Vitellius having dismissed Cæcina in the manner we have related, and a few days after ordered Fabius Valens to take the field, buried himself in the bowers and alleys of his gardens, striving to smother all his cares in voluptuousness and all manner of excesses. From Rome he retired to the grove at Aricinum, where, while he passed his time, resigned to sloth and gluttony, he was alarmed with the defection of the fleet at Ravenna. Soon after, came another melancholy account, yet blended with joy, that Cæcina had revolted, but was by the army put in irons. Upon this intelligence he returned to the city, and, in a full assembly, extolled the fidelity of the soldiery; but ordered Publius Sabinus, captain of the prætorian guards, to be confined, on account of his intimacy with Cæcina, and appointed in his room Alphenus Varus. The senate, informed of the defection of Cæcina, inveighed against him in a studied style of indignation; for not a man dropped a bitter expression against the leaders of the opposite party, and all, with great circumspection, avoided mentioning Vespasian. Though only one day remained of Cæcina's consulship, he was deposed, and succeeded by Roscius Regulus, who, upon the last day of October, began his magistracy, and

" Joseph. Bell. lib. iv. cap. 41, 35, 36.

" Tacit. Hist. lib. iii. cap.

with the day ended it. In the mean time Valens, who was upon his way to join the troops at Hostilia and Cremona, being informed, that the fleet at Ravenna had revolted to the enemy, instead of quickening his march, halted, and wrote to Vitellius for succours.

The emperor immediately dispatched after him three cohorts, with the squadron of horse from Britain. These Valens sent forward to Ariminum; but he himself turning aside, followed the route to Umbria, and from thence to Hetruria. Having there learned the issue of the battle at Cremona, he conceived a design, which, had it been put in execution, would have been attended with very dreadful consequences: he proposed to embark for Narbonne Gaul, and landing upon any part of that coast, rouse those powerful provinces, and all the Roman forces there, as also the several nations of Germany, and thence renew the war. With this design he embarked in the port of Pisa; but was, by contrary winds, forced to land at Monaco, where he was kindly receiyed by Marinus Maturus, procurator of the maritime Alps, who, though all the country round espoused the opposite party, had never swerved from his allegiance. By him Valens was informed, that Valerius Paulinus, procurator of Narbonne Gaul, an officer of known bravery, and Vespasian's intimate friend, had declared for him, and secured with a strong garrison the city of Foro-Julium, now Frejus, which commanded all access from the sea. Upon this intelligence, Valens returned directly to his vessels, with four soldiers of the prætorian guards, three friends, and as many centurions, leaving to Maturus, and the rest, full liberty to stay, and swear, if they pleased, fidelity to Vespasian. As he hovered on the coasts of Gaul, he was, by contrary winds, driven upon the Stêchades, islands near Marseilles; and there, by some gallies belonging to Paulinus, taken prisoner; a circumstance which was no sooner known, than first the neighbouring, and soon after the most distant, provinces espoused, without hesitation, the cause of the conqueror. In Spain, the first legion, named Adjutrix, which had served under Otho, declared for Vespasian, and also the tenth and the sixth. In Britain the second legion, which Vespasian had commanded in the reign of Claudius, acceded to his party, though not without some opposition from the other legions, in which many centurions, and a great number of soldiers had been promoted by Vitellius: however, they were all brought at length to acknowlege Vespasian *.

Valens retires to Hetruria.

Designs to raise Gaul,

Is taken prisoner.

Gaul, Spain, and Britain, declare for Vespasian.

* Tacit. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 41—45.

*Vitellius
further all
bad tidings.*

In the mean time, melancholy accounts of the overthrow at Cremona reaching Rome, Vitellius, instead of deliberating with his friends about the most proper measures to be taken in so critical a conjuncture, with a stupid dissimulation, smothered the news of the calamity, feigning, that all his proceedings prospered, and, by such false representations leaving his condition quite desperate. About his person was observed a wonderful silence concerning the war; and through the city all discourses about it were prohibited, which, for this very cause, grew more frequent. However, he privately sent persons, in whom he could confide, to view the enemy's camp; but, upon their return, when he had secretly examined them, he caused them all to be murdered, that they might not divulge what they had seen. Julius Agrestis, a centurion, having attempted in vain to rouse the emperor from his lethargy, at last obtained permission to survey the forces of the enemy, and to learn the transactions at Cremona. Agrestis did not assume the behaviour of a spy, nor attempt to escape the notice of Primus; but declaring the instructions from the emperor, and his own design, demanded to view the whole in person. Primus readily sent certain persons with him to shew him the field of battle, the desolation and remains of Cremona, and the legions taken prisoners. Agrestis, having carefully examined the enemy's strength, returned to Rome; but as Vitellius gave no credit to his accounts, and even accused him of corruption and infidelity; "Since then (said he) some remarkable confirmation is necessary, and since neither my life nor my death can serve you, I will furnish an evidence which you may credit:" having thus spoken, he fell upon his own sword at the gates of the palace.

*Ariminum
besieged by
Vespasian's
troops.*

Some of Vespasian's troops, under the conduct of Cornelius Fuscus, advancing as far as Ariminum, besieged that place, and possessed themselves of the plains of Umbria, and the territories of Picenum, lying along the Adriatic Sea. Thus between Vespasian and Vitellius, all Italy was shared, and the ridges of the Apennine become the common boundary. As winter approached, and the plains were flooded by the overflowing of the Po, Primus sent the legions back to Verona, with the aged and wounded; and passing the Po, at the head of the auxiliary cohorts and cavalry, advanced as far as the temple of Fortune, at present a city on the Adriatic Gulf, known by the name of Fano. There he halted, upon intelligence that the prætorian cohorts had already left Rome, and that guards were posted

upon the Apennine to oppose his passage. Vitellius, roused at length from a state of stupidity, had ordered Julius Priscus, and Alphenus Varus, with fourteen prætorian cohorts, a legion of marines, and other forces, to seize the passes of the Apennine. They were all chosen men, and able to have carried on an offensive war, had they been under the command of an enterprising general. They encamped at Mevania, now Bevagna, in the neighbourhood of Foligno; but Vitellius, without departing in the least from his usual course of debauchery, continued at Rome, where he settled a succession of consuls for ten years, discharged some nations from every kind of tribute, conferred upon others fresh immunities, and, in short, without any regard to futurity, rent and exhausted the empire with such extravagant bounties, as could neither be granted nor accepted by men of sense, but were highly applauded by the unthinking herd.

Vitellius sends an army to secure the passes of the Apennine.

At length, moved by the repeated solicitations of the army, he left Rome, and repaired to the camp at Mevania, attended by a great number of senators, which only served to expose him to public contempt and derision; for as he was quite unacquainted with the military art, he was continually applying for information how to draw up an army, how to procure intelligence, and by what measures he might defeat the designs of the foe. Upon every flying report of the approach of the enemy, he betrayed great fear, and never failed to get intoxicated. In the end, surfeited with the camp, and apprised of the revolt of the fleet at Misenum, he returned to Rome in the utmost consternation. The fleet was induced to revolt by Claudius Faventius, who was only a centurion, and had been degraded by Galba with marks of ignominy. By forging letters from Vespasian, and in his name tempting the officers with great rewards, he prevailed upon them to transfer their allegiance. To reclaim them, Vitellius made choice of Claudius Julianus, who had lately commanded the fleet, and was highly esteemed by the marines: but he, without hesitation, joined the party of Vespasian; and putting himself at their head, took the city of Terracina. Vitellius then dispatched messengers to the army, with orders to retire from Mevania, and drawing nearer to Rome, to encamp at Narnia, now Narni. From it he detached six cohorts, and five hundred horse, whom he sent under the command of his brother Lucius, to oppose the soldiers of the fleet: he remained at Rome, where he assembled the people by their tribes, and to all who desired to be enlisted, administered the oath of fidelity. As he excited compassion by his mournful countenance, his doleful expressions,

He arrives at the camp.

The fleet at Misenum revolts.

*Vitellius
takes the
title of Cæ-
sar.*

expressions, and many tears; was liberal, and even extravagant in his promises, multitudes entered their names. To this dastardly crowd he gave the awful name of legions; to himself he assumed, at this juncture, the title of Cæsar, which he had hitherto rejected, as if the Cæsars alone were destined to hold the sovereign power^z.

*Primus
passes the
Apennine.*

The army no sooner left Mevania than the Samnites, the Pelignians, and the Marsians, embraced the cause of Vespasian. At the same time Primus, informed of the enemy's motions, hastened to pass the Apennine, where, while his troops were annoyed with the cold, and struggling with difficulty out of the deep snow, he reflected on the dangers he must have undergone, had not Vitellius's army abandoned their post. Primus having passed the Apennine, encamped at Carfulæ, between Mevania and Narnia, and there waited the arrival of the legions from Cremona, which were in full march to join him. As the forces of Vitellius were only ten miles distant, the troops which Primus had with him were for attacking them before the legions assembled, whom they considered rather as sharers in the prey than partakers in the peril: but Primus found means to calm their rage, and in the mean time the legions arrived, and soon after possessed themselves of Interamna, now Termini; a motion which so terrified Vitellius's army, that they began to join the enemy in whole companies and troops, being encouraged in this desertion by their tribunes and centurions.

*Valens put
to death.*

However, some of the common foldiers persisted in their adherence to Vitellius; and a report was industriously propagated, that Valens had escaped into Germany, and was assembling a powerful army. To confute this rumour, and prevent their cherishing any farther hopes, Valens was put to death at Urbinum, where he was detained in prison, his head sent to the camp, and displayed to the view of Vitellius's troops. At this sight, they sunk into despair; and seeing themselves on all sides deprived of hope, joined in a body the party of Vespasian. Upon this general defection, Primus and Varus did not neglect, by repeated messages, to make offers to Vitellius of safety to his person, of large revenues, of any private retirement in Campania, or elsewhere, if he would resign the sovereignty, and submit to Vespasian. Mucianus likewise dispatched letters with the like conditions; to which he would have yielded, had he not been dissuaded by his friends from ever leading a private life, after he had been emperor. To him now remained

*The whole
army passes
over to
Vespasian.*

^z Tacit. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 55—58.

only the city of Rome, which Flavius Sabinus might have easily reduced; but, he from a natural abhorrence to cruelty, or because he envied the grandeur of his brother's fortune, neglected to act with any warmth or alacrity: it is true, he often conferred with Vitellius on the means of restoring public peace, but could not be prevailed upon to use violence. In one of these conferences, Vitellius agreed to resign the empire upon certain conditions, which Sabinus assured him should be ratified by his brother Vespasian: a circumstance which was no sooner known, than his followers exerted their utmost efforts to divert him from his resolution; representing to him how ignominious, how insecure the terms of peace were, since the performing them entirely depended upon the wanton humour of the conqueror. Notwithstanding all their endeavours to rouse him to some daring and brave attempt, having learned on the eighteenth of December the defection of his army at Narnia, he left the palace in deep mourning, attended by his domestics, with his son, a helpless infant; and passing in this forlorn condition through the streets of the city, arrived at the place where the people used to assemble. There to the multitude, which had flocked from all quarters, he declared his resolution in a few words, such as suited his present condition, that he voluntarily withdrew for the sake of the public peace, and the good of the commonwealth; that he only desired they would remember him; and to his brother, to his wife, and to his innocent and tender children, shew compassion and mercy: at the same time extending his arms, with his little son in them, he recommended him to them all; and at last, bursting into tears, he ungirt his sword, and presented it to the consul Cæcilius Simplex, thus resigning the power of life and death over the citizens.

Vitellius designs to abdicate;

As the consul refused to receive it, and the assembly with loud clamours opposed his resignation, he departed, declaring, that he intended to divest himself of the ensigns of the imperial dignity in the temple of Concord, and thence to seek a private retirement in his brother's house: but the people, sensibly affected with this distressful scene, declared with one voice against his withdrawing to a private dwelling, called him back to the palace, and even shut up every other way. Thus precluded, not knowing what to do, nor how to proceed, he returned to the palace*. As the rumour had already flown all over the city, that Vitellius had

but is not permitted.

* Tacit. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 60—69. Suet. cap. 15. Dio, lib. lxxv. p. 740.

Flavius Sabinus takes arms, but is defeated.

He retires to the Capitol.

The Capitol besieged;

and burnt to the ground.

abdicated the empire; all the principal senators, great numbers of knights, with the city-guards, and those of the night-watch, crowded to the house of Flavius Sabinus. Thither news were brought, that Vitellius, encouraged by the people, and his German guards, was returned to the palace. As Sabinus had advanced too far to retreat, all his friends advised him to take arms, and force Vitellius to adhere to the treaty he had made. Sabinus at last yielded to their advice; but some of the boldest of Vitellius's followers, as he advanced to the palace, attacked him with great resolution, and put him to flight.

Sabinus, under this distress, had no other resource but to shut himself up in the Capitol; which he did accordingly with a small number of soldiers, some senators, and a few Roman knights. The soldiers of Vitellius immediately invested the Capitol, but with stations so loose and ill-guarded, that Sabinus, during the night, found means to acquaint Primus with his danger, and to cause his own children, Sabinus and Clemens, and his brother's son Domitian, to be brought to him. Next morning, when day began to dawn, before hostilities were committed on either side, Sabinus sent Cornelius Martialis, a centurion of the first rank, to remind Vitellius of the treaty, and expostulate with him about his thus violating such solemn stipulations. Vitellius blamed the soldiers, whose ardour, he said, it was not in his power to restrain. He even advised Martialis to retire by a private way, that he might not be assassinated, as the mediator of a peace which they abhorred. He was scarce returned to the Capitol, when Vitellius's soldiers approached, and began the attack with great fury. The besieged, with showers of stones and tiles, strove to overwhelm the assailants; but the latter, advancing boldly to the gates of the citadel, set fire to them, and must have entered, had not Sabinus pulled down the statues, and, with these glorious monuments of antiquity, raised in the very entrance a new wall. Then they attempted to force a passage from the opposite avenues of the Capitol, climbing over the contiguous buildings, which, during a long peace, had been suffered to be raised to the height of the foundations of the Capitol. Here the assault was close and fierce. The adjoining roofs being set on fire, whether by the assailants or the besieged is uncertain, the flame spread from thence to the porticos of the Capitol; and by means of the timber, which was very old, spread every way with terrible rapidity; nor did the conflagration cease, till that glorious and stately edifice was burnt to the ground^b.

^b Tacit. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 70—72.

While

While the Capitol was burning, Vitellius's bands, bursting in, put all who opposed them to the sword: of these the most signal were Cornelius Martialis, Æmilius Pacensis, Casperius Niger, and Didius Scæva. Flavius Sabinus and Quintius Atticus, the consul, were taken and loaded with irons. The rest, by stratagem, escaped, having learned the word by which the soldiers of Vitellius were distinguished by one another. Young Domitian was saved by the contrivance of one of his freedmen, under the disguise of a linen robe, as if he had belonged to the tribe of the priests who offered sacrifices in the Capitol. Sabinus and Atticus were carried to Vitellius; and he did all that lay in his power to appease the fury of the populace and soldiery, who cried aloud for their execution. They were chiefly incensed against Sabinus; and therefore, instead of regarding the emperor's entreaties, they ran him through in his presence; then cutting off his head, dragged his trunk through the streets to the Scalæ Gemoniæ, where the bodies of malefactors were usually exposed. He had, for the space of thirty-five years, carried arms for the commonwealth; had governed Mœsia seven years, and Rome twelve, maintaining an unblemished reputation both in peace and war. The only failing, which even his enemies could object to him, was his loquacity. As to the innocence of his life, and justice of his actions, he was altogether blameless. All agree, that before Vespasian became emperor, Sabinus was considered as the chief ornament of the Flavian family, and the support of Vespasian himself, who was his younger brother. When the people demanded the sacrifice of the consul Atticus, Vitellius persisted in opposing them, being entirely reconciled to him, in consequence of his openly confessing, that he had set fire to the Capitol; and by thus assuming the odium of the crime, though the whole was by some thought a fiction, acquitted the party of Vitellius of the sacrilege.

Sabinus taken prisoner;

and murdered.

About the same time, Lucius Vitellius, the emperor's brother, defeated in Campania the marines who had declared for Vespasian, and retook Terracina. Six small gallees escaped, and in one of them Apollinaris, commander of the fleet. All the other vessels were seized along the shore, or, surcharged by the fugitives, sunk to the bottom. Julianus, who had been sent by Vitellius to reclaim the fleet, and had gone over to Vespasian, was taken prisoner, and, by Lucius's orders, first inhumanly scourged, and then executed. Had Vitellius's troops, now elated with success, proceeded directly to Rome, a dreadful slaughter must have ensued; nor could it have been decided without the destruction

Lucius Vitellius takes Terracina.

*Primus
marches to
Rome.*

struction of the city. While Lucius was deliberating, whether he should return forthwith to Rome, or pursue the reduction of Campania, the troops of Primus, informed of the danger of Sabinus, hastened to his relief. Petilius Cerealis, nearly allied to Vespasian, a commander of no mean character, upon the first news that the Capitol was besieged, was detached with a thousand horse, and ordered to cross the Sabine territories, and enter Rome through the Salarian way. Primus himself advanced along the great Flaminian road, and, when the night was far advanced, arrived at a place called the Red Rocks. There he received the dismal tidings, that Sabinus was murdered, the Capitol reduced to ashes, the city under dreadful consternation, and the populace and slaves all under arms for Vitellius. Petilius Cerealis, meeting not far from the city a party of the enemy, attacked them furiously, but was received with equal resolution, and, after a long and bloody contest, put to flight, and pursued as far as Fidenæ. This success heightened the zeal and partiality of the people for Vitellius; they ran to arms, most of them snatching up whatever fell first in their way, and then demanded to be led out against the enemy.

*Vitellius
sends am-
bassadors
to treat of
an accom-
modation.*

Vitellius commended their zeal, but at the same time sent ambassadors to Cerealis and Primus, to renew the former treaty. The soldiers of Cerealis insulted the deputies, and even wounded the prætor Arulenus Rusticus, a man of great merit and distinction, and slew his principal licitor for daring to open a passage through the crowd. Those who went to Primus were better received: they were attended by the Vestal virgins, who brought letters from Vitellius to Primus, wherein the emperor desired, that the battle, which was to be the last, might be suspended for one day, since during that interval all things might be easily accommodated. Primus dismissed the virgins with all demonstrations of honour; but to Vitellius replied, that by the murder of Sabinus, and the burning of the Capitol, all means of ending the war by treaty were cut off. The ambassadors were no sooner gone, than the whole army moved, advancing in three bodies to the walls of Rome, where the forces of Vitellius expected them, divided likewise into three bodies. The weak and unwarlike populace was routed at the first onset; but the other troops, falling out against the enemy as they approached the walls of the city, attacked them with a fury hardly to be expressed. Primus's men stood their ground with equal resolution and intrepidity; so that the most cruel and bloody battle ensued that the Romans had ever sustained.

*Primus's
answer.*

The

The conflict lasted several hours with various success; but in the end proved favourable to Primus. The Vitellians were with great slaughter driven into the city, where they assembled again; and though vanquished and routed, renewed the battle with fresh vigour, and continued it to the close of the day. The people gathered about the combatants as spectators; and as if they had been only attending the representation of a fight exhibited for public amusement, they sometimes favoured one party, sometimes another, with theatrical shouts and clappings: nay, as often as the soldiers on either side turned their backs, or fled into houses, or concealed themselves in shops, they insisted upon their being dragged out and slain. The people, as Tacitus observes, were so little affected with this tragical spectacle, that at the same time were seen in one place cruel conflicts, and bleeding wounds; in another luxurious banqueting, and voluptuous revellings; every-where streams of blood, and heaps of carcases; and hard-by, wanton debauchees, and lewd harlots: in short, all the abominations of a most dissolute and riotous peace, and all the barbarities of a most dreadful and cruel civil war. Primus's troops, having in the end prevailed, and made themselves masters of the city, marched in the next place to storm the camp of the prætorian guards, whither the most determined among the enemy had retired. As they considered the camp as their last hope and resource, they exerted their utmost efforts in defending it; and though in number inferior, often repulsed the enemy. At length, when the gates, in spite of all opposition, were burst open, uniting together, they made a last effort; but being overpowered by numbers, they all fell facing the enemy^c.

*Vitellius's
men driven
into the
city;*

*which is
taken with
the camp.*

Vitellius, seeing the city taken, caused himself to be conveyed in a chair, through a private part of the palace, to his wife's house upon mount Aventine, with a design to lie concealed during the day, and fly by night to his brother, then at Terracina: but as to one who is under dread, and fears all things, the present affairs seem most dangerous, he soon changed his mind, and returned to the palace. Suetonius writes, that he altered his resolution upon a groundless report, that a treaty of peace was concluded. Be that as it will, he found the palace now quite desolate and abandoned; all his slaves and domestics having fled, or carefully avoiding to meet him. Terrified with the dismal solitude and silence, he tried to enter several apartments;

*Vitellius
abandons
the palace,*

*but returns
to it.*

^c Tacit. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 73—84. Dio, lib. lxxv. p. 742. Suet. in Vit. cap. 15. Joseph. Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 41.

He is discovered;

but finding them all fastened, and being at last weary with such miserable and solitary wandering, he thrust himself into the porter's lodge, and concealed himself behind the bed. In the mean time, a party of Primus's soldiers entering the palace, searched every place and corner, till at last they discovered the emperor, and dragged him out. As they knew him not, they inquired who he was, and whether he could inform them what was become of Vitellius. He deceived them at first; but being soon recognized by Julius Placidus, tribune of a prætorian band, he pretended to have matters of the utmost importance to impart to Vespasian, and with great earnestness begged to be kept, though it were in prison, till his arrival.

insulted by the populace,

But the tribune and soldiers, deaf to all entreaties, tied his hands behind him, threw a halter about his neck, rent all his apparel, and dragged him half-naked into the forum through the great street called the Sacred Way, compelling him with their swords pointed at his throat to hold up his head, and present his face to the indignities offered him by the mob, who now reviled him in a most outrageous manner: they forced him to behold his own statues thrown down, and to view the place where Galba had been murdered. While he was thus dragged along, a German soldier meeting him, drew his sword, and discharged a violent blow, whether at Vitellius to revenge some former injury, or at the tribune, or to release the emperor from insults and derision, is uncertain. The tribune's ear he actually cut off, and was himself instantly slain. They pushed Vitellius forward, the populace the whole time upbraiding him with his gluttony, his target of Minerva, his lewdness, and even the imperfections of his body; for he was enormously tall, corpulent, and somewhat lame, having been hurt by a chariot, while he was attending Caligula at the races in the circus. He bore all the insults and indignities offered him without uttering a single word, except to the tribune, to whom, while he treated him in a manner altogether ignominious, he answered, that nevertheless he had been his emperor. They dragged him at last to the Gemoniæ, the common charnel of malefactors, where the body of Flavius Sabinus had lain exposed, and there with many wounds put an end to his unhappy life: his head was cut off, and carried on a pole through the chief streets of the city; his body was dragged with a hook, and with all possible ignominy thrown into the Tiber, but afterwards buried by his widow Galeria Fundana. Thus died Aulus Vitellius, the ninth emperor of Rome, according to some in the fifty-fourth, according to others in the fifty-eighth year

and executed.

year of his age, after having reigned near a year, from the time he was proclaimed emperor at Cologne, and eight months and a few days after the death of Otho. He was raised to the first dignities of the state by no parts or merit of his own, but through the lustre of his family, which was one of the most conspicuous in Rome. By his extravagant bounties and largesses, he gained the affections both of the soldiery and people. Of the former, many adhered to him with unshaken fidelity to the last, though, in the opinion of historians, he had not one good quality to recommend him to such as wished well to the republic, having been stained even from his tender years with all manner of crimes, and most infamous and abominable iniquities^d. The senate could not be assembled till next day, the senators and magistrates having either privately withdrawn from the city, or concealed themselves in the houses of their dependents. Domitian apprehending now no farther danger, presented himself to the leaders of the party, and was by the soldiers thronging about him saluted Cæsar, and by them conducted in triumph to his father's house.

Domitian saluted Cæsar.

In the mean time Lucius Vitellius was with his cohorts advancing from Terracina to the relief of his brother. The cavalry was therefore sent forward to Aricia, and the legions were ordered to advance to Bovillæ: but Lucius was no sooner informed of the unhappy fate of the emperor, than he surrendered himself and his troops to the pleasure of the conquerors. The soldiers were disarmed, and led through the city, guarded on each side by files of armed men, without betraying a suppliant look, or dropping a dastardly expression, though outrageously insulted by the vulgar. They were all committed to prison, but soon after released. Vitellius was put to death; a punishment which he deserved, being no less addicted to all kinds of vices than his brother. Notwithstanding all his defects, he wanted neither courage nor activity, and supported the cause with resolution and vigilance. By the death of the emperor and his brother, war was rather seen to cease than peace to commence; for the conquerors, continuing in arms, searched all over the city for the conquered, filling with carnage, and mangled bodies the streets, the places of public resort, the temples, and even the private houses, which they burst open and pillaged, pretending that there some Vitellians were concealed. The indigent part of the populace failed not to join the soldiers in the general violence and spoil; so

Lucius Vitellius surrenders himself and his troops, and is put to death.

The miserable condition of the city.

^d Tacit. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 85, 86: lib. iv. cap. 2. Suet. in Vit. cap. 4, 5, 15, 18. Dio; p. 743:

that on all sides nothing was heard but dismal complaints and outcries, and nothing seen but the dreadful calamities of a city stormed and sacked. Domitian, who already enjoyed the name and residence of Cæsar, instead of striving to check the insolence of the soldiery, attended his infamous pleasures, and only by his dissolute life shewed himself the son of an emperor. Primus, in whose hands the whole power was lodged, made use of it only to plunder more freely, being entirely taken up in conveying from the palace treasure, moveables, and domestic slaves, as if he were still seizing the spoil of Cremona. When the fury of the soldiers began to abate, the senate met, and confirmed the sovereignty of Vespasian, decreeing to him with great alacrity all the titles and prerogatives ever vested in former princes. They declared him consul, giving him his son Titus for colleague in that dignity: Domitian they honoured with the prætorship, and consular authority: they presented Primus with the consular ornaments, and Cornelius Fuscus, and Arrius Varus, with those of the prætorship. All these decrees were passed at the motion of Valerius Asiaticus, consul-elect.

*Vespasian
acknowledged emper-
or by the
senate.*

During these commotions in Italy, the Batavians revolted, under the conduct of the celebrated Claudius Civilis; but of the causes and events of this war, which continued long, we shall treat in the following reign. The people of Dacia also rose up in arms; a people never well affected to the Romans, and then restrained by no forces, since the army was withdrawn from Mœsia. They stormed the winter-quarters of the auxiliary cohorts, passed the Danube, and were proceeding to level the intrenchments of the legions, when Mucianus happened to march through Mœsia with the forces of the East. As that commander was already apprised of the victory at Cremona, he detached the sixth legion to oppose the Barbarians, and appointed Fonteius Agrippa, governor of Mœsia, with part of the troops which had surrendered at Cremona, and which it was thought advisable to engage in a foreign war, that they might not disturb domestic peace. Agrippa obliged the enemy to re-pass the Danube; and to prevent any farther attempts of the like nature, built a great number of forts on the banks of that river, and strengthened them with numerous garrisons.

*The Da-
cians in
arms are
quelled by
Mucianus.*

In Pontus likewise great disturbances were raised by Anicetus, formerly freedman to king Polemon, in great power under him, and commander of the royal navy. As he

*Distur-
bances in
Pontus.*

was highly provoked against the Romans for reducing the kingdom into a province, in the reign of Nero, and by that change depriving him of all his authority, he seized the present opportunity, and levying forces under colour of assisting Vitellius, surpris'd the city of Trebizond, burnt the fleet which guarded the coasts, and entering into an alliance with the neighbouring Barbarians, scoured the sea, and committed dreadful ravages on the coasts of Asia. Against him Vespasian sent a choice body of legionaries, under the command of Viridius Geminus, an officer distinguished in war; who, attacking the enemy while they were roving about in quest of booty, drove them into their vessels; then with some gallies built with great expedition, chased Anicetus into the mouth of the river Chobus, where he relied upon the protection of Sedochus king of the Lazians, a people of Colchis. That prince seem'd at first determined to defend his ally; but as soon as a reward for his treachery was offer'd, and a war threatened, he betrayed Anicetus, and all his followers, to the conqueror. Thus ended that servile war; and Vespasian received an account of the success which had attended his arms, a few days before the joyful tidings were brought him of the great victory gained by his forces at Cræmona^f.

Anicetus
taken.

C H A P. LIV.

The History of Rome, from the Death of Vitellius to the Death of Domitian, the last of the twelve Cæsars, in whom ended the Flavian Family.

THE Flavian family, now rais'd to the highest pitch of grandeur, was not conspicuous either for its lustre or antiquity. Titus Flavius, the emperor's grandfather, was a citizen of Reate, now Rieti, in the country of the Sabines; and, in the civil wars between Cæsar and Pompey, serv'd under the latter in quality of centurion, but left the army after the battle of Pharsalia; and, having obtained his pardon, was employ'd in collecting taxes, under the farmers of the public revenue. His son Titus Flavius Sabinus follow'd the same profession, and acquitted himself

The descent, birth, and actions, of Vespasian before he attained the sovereignty.

^f Tacit. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 46, 47.

in it with such integrity, that, by the several cities of Asia, where he was receiver of the tax called quadragesima, statues were erected to him with this inscription, "To the honest publican." Afterwards he withdrew into the country of the Helvetii, where he acquired a considerable fortune by lending money upon interest. He married Vespasia Polla, whose father had been military tribune and prefect of the camp; and had by her two children, Sabinus, and Vespasian, who was born on the seventeenth of November of the ninth year of the common Christian æra; so that he was raised to the empire in the sixtieth year of his age. He was, amongst many other new men, chosen from the municipal towns, from the colonies, and even from the provinces, admitted into the senate by the emperor Caligula. He afterwards served in quality of military tribune in Thrace, was quæstor of the provinces of Cyrene and Crete, ædile, and prætor. He attended the emperor Claudius into Britain, where he distinguished himself, though only tribune of a legion, by many remarkable exploits. He was consul during the two last months of the eleventh year of Claudius's reign, and by Nero appointed governor of Africa in quality of proconsul. He married Flavia Domitilla, a native of Africa, at first slave to Statilius Capella, but afterwards manumitted, and made free of the city. By her he had two sons, Titus and Domitian, who reigned after him, and one daughter, named Domitilla, who died, as did also her mother, before his accession to the empire.

*A mean
flatterer,
while in a
private
station.*

While he was in a private station, he used to court the favour of the prince by the most abject flattery. During his prætorship, he entreated permission to exhibit extraordinary sports in honour of Caligula, on account of the pretended victory in Germany. He was one of the few sycophants who were of opinion that those who were said to have conspired against that prince should be publicly executed, and their bodies left unburied. In the presence of the whole senate, he returned Caligula thanks for having done him the honour of inviting him to his table. He was chiefly indebted to Narcissus, the freedman of Claudius, for the consulship, and the two sacerdotal dignities which he enjoyed: what dignities these were, we are no where told. After the death of Narcissus, his great patron, he withdrew, and led a private life, dreading the violent spirit of Agrippina, who bore an irreconcilable hatred to that minister, and all his friends; it was therefore probably after her death, that he was by Nero appointed proconsul of Africa, in which government he acquitted himself, if we

may

may believe Suetonius², with honour and integrity; according to Tacitus¹, with ignominy and oppression. Soon after his return from Africa, his affairs being in a desperate condition, and his credit low, he was obliged to mortgage his house and possessions to his brother Sabinus, and to support himself and his family, by selling and changing horses, and even by other means still more degrading; for he was convicted of having extorted from a young knight the sum of two hundred thousand sesterces, for employing his interest in procuring him a place in the senate, against the inclination and express will of his father. He attended Nero in Achaia, where he incurred that prince's displeasure, and was banished the court, for his inattention while the emperor was singing; a crime, which had nearly cost him his life at Rome, as we have related elsewhere. Thus disgraced, he withdrew into the country, and there led a life altogether private and retired, expecting every moment a tragical fate, when he was, contrary to his expectation, appointed by Nero to command in the war against the Jews, as a person of great military abilities, and one, who, on account of his mean extraction, gave him no umbrage. He was therefore sent into Judæa with three legions, eight squadrons of horse, and ten auxiliary cohorts, his son Titus serving under him in quality of his lieutenant. In the course of that war, which proved so fatal to the Jewish nation, Vespasian acquired signal reputation. In every duty incumbent upon a leader, or even a soldier, he was indefatigable: it was he who always led the march; he who always chose the ground for encamping. Upon consultations and dispatches he spent nights and days, and was ever ready, upon any exigency, to encounter the enemy hand to hand: his diet was such as chance presented: in his garb and dress, he varied little from a common soldier. Had he been exempt from avarice, he would have equalled the most famous commanders of ancient times: with that vice he is charged by most writers; among the rest, by Tacitus, who owed his first promotion in the state to his interest; but nevertheless declares, as becomes an impartial historian, against admitting personal hatred or affection in the characters of men. After the death of Nero and Galba, while Otho and Vitellius were contending for the sovereignty, he began to cherish hopes of obtaining it for himself, relying on several prodigies, prophecies, and propitious responses of oracles. Of the many predictions, that of Josephus the historian is the most remarkable, who saluted

His character as a general.

Is taxed with avarice.

¹ Suet. in Vesp. cap. 4.

² Tacit. Hist. lib. ii, cap. 37.

Vespasian with the title of emperor even in Nero's reign, and assured him, he should be soon invested with the sovereign power. His prediction is mentioned not only by himself¹, but likewise by Suetonius², who tells us, that Josephus, being by Vespasian's orders put in irons, boldly affirmed, that in a short time he should by him be set at liberty; but that he should be emperor first.

Is acknowledged emperor in the Eastern provinces.

Vespasian, being encouraged by Mucianus, governor of Syria, by Tiberius Alexander, governor of Egypt, and by all his officers, not to neglect the present opportunity, while two unworthy competitors were contending for the empire, at length yielded; and was proclaimed emperor at Alexandria on the first of July, of the sixty-ninth year of the Christian æra; on the third of the same month, in Judæa, where he then resided; on the fifteenth, in Syria; and a few days after, in all the provinces of the East. He was not in himself at all changed by so sudden a turn of fortune: no loftiness appeared in his aspect, no arrogance nor any new circumstance of deportment, under his new character. He immediately rewarded his friends, raising some to military commands, others to be governors of provinces, several to the rank of senators, most of them men of signal merit and accomplishments, who afterwards acquired the highest honours in the state. As he thought it below him to court the soldiers by largesses, he promised them no greater donative in the heat of the civil war, than had been given them by others during full peace. In the council which he established at Berytus for the direction of all weighty affairs, it was resolved, that Titus should prosecute the war against the Jews, and Mucianus march with part of the forces against Vitellius. But Titus undertook nothing till the next year. Antonius Primus, with the Illyrian army, defeated the troops of Vitellius before the arrival of Mucianus; made himself master of Rome, and all Italy; and caused the unhappy emperor to be publicly executed as a common criminal: all which transactions we have already related.

Meanwhile Vespasian, having passed some time at Antioch, the capital of Syria, proceeded from thence to Egypt, where he received the agreeable tidings of the victory gained by Primus at Cremona. He forthwith hastened to Alexandria, with a design to distress Rome by famine, since from Egypt the city was chiefly supplied with corn. He was at the same time preparing to invade Africa by sea and land, in order to bring upon the enemy, by intercepting

¹ Joseph. Bell. Jud. lib. 7, cap. 12.

² Sueton. cap. 5.

their provisions, the calamity of hunger, with that of dissension. But during these transactions, many persons of all ranks and degrees arrived from Italy, to acquaint him with the fate and fall of Vitellius; which were no sooner known, than multitudes flocked from all quarters, notwithstanding it was then winter, to court the favour of the new emperor; insomuch that Alexandria, the greatest city of the empire after Rome, proved too confined for the numbers of ambassadors, deputies, noblemen, and officers, who resorted thither. Among the rest, an embassy arrived from Vologeses, king of Parthia, who offered to assist him with forty thousand Parthian horse. Vespasian returned him thanks, and, desiring he would send ambassadors to the senate, acquainted him that the commonwealth was re-established in peace¹. The death of Vitellius made Vespasian alter his measures; for instead of distressing the city, which had already proclaimed him emperor, with famine, he dispatched thither a great number of vessels laden with corn; which arrived very seasonably, there not being at that time remaining in all the public stores above ten days provision of grain². As the winter-season was far advanced, Vespasian continued some months at Alexandria, waiting for the approach of summer.

Receives news of the fate of Vitellius.

Mucianus arrived at Rome, according to Josephus, the day after the death of Vitellius; and in a moment arrogated the whole administration to himself. Licinius Mucianus was a man remarkable for a strange combination of good and bad qualities; luxury and vigilance, haughtiness and complaisance; when unemployed, excessively voluptuous; of infinite abilities and activity, when business required them. Hence his equal share of praise and reproach; as a public minister, admired; as a private voluptuary, condemned. He was a great master in the several arts of insinuation, an able orator, well versed in civil affairs, ready in foreseeing events, dexterous at concerting schemes, high in credit with those who were above him, under him, or in equal authority with him; in short, such a man as could more easily create an emperor, than be one. Vespasian, as he was chiefly indebted to him for the empire, upon his departure for Italy, invested him with unlimited power, and is even said to have trusted him with his signet, as if he had shared the sovereignty. Hence, upon his arrival at Rome, he was considered and revered, rather as the emperor's colleague, than as a subordinate minister. Quite

Mucianus arrives at Rome.

His character.

¹ Tacit. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 51. Joseph. Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 52.
² Dio, Val. p. 792.

sunk was the power of Antonius Primus, and Arrius Varus, which last Vespasian had already appointed captain of the prætorian guards. As Mucianus could not dissemble his animosity towards them, the city immediately forsook her late favourites, and devoted herself to the new minion. To him alone court was paid, to him all addresses were made: neither did he neglect his own grandeur; for he never appeared in public but encompassed with guards, and attended with an equipage becoming a sovereign. He forbore indeed the name, but performed all the functions, of sovereignty. Soon after his arrival, he caused Asiaticus, the late emperor's freedman, to atone for his late wicked actions, by suffering the death of a slave. His doom was by every one expected, and even wished for; but the death of Calpurnius Galerianus occasioned a general dread in the city. He was the son of Caius Piso, who in the reign of Nero had aspired to the sovereignty; but had himself no share in that conspiracy, nor had ever attempted to disturb the state. However, as he was of an illustrious family, of a graceful person, and greatly beloved by the people, he was, by order of Mucianus, committed to the custody of a band of soldiers, sent forty miles from Rome, and there put to death by having his veins opened ^a.

*He causes
Calpurnius
Galerianus
to be murdered.*

While Mucianus thus ruled with absolute sway in Rome, the Batavians were carrying on the war against the Romans with amazing success in Lower Germany. Of that war we shall here, as in its proper place, briefly recount the causes and events. The Batavians, originally the same people with the Cattans, who dwelt beyond the Rhine, being driven from their country by a domestic insurrection, settled at the extreme borders of Gaul, in an island formed by the mouths of the Rhine and the ocean (H). They were not subjects, but allies, of the Romans, and obliged to assist them only with troops commanded by men of the first rank amongst them. They had at this time eight cohorts, men thoroughly exercised in the wars of Germany and Britain. These Vitellius had gained over to his party, and they had a great share in the victory at Bedriacum; but proving afterwards refractory and ungovernable, the emperor thought it adviseable to order them to their own country. Julius Paulus, and Claudius Civilis, both men of royal descent,

The Batavians take arms.

^a Tacit. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 11, Joseph. Bell. Jud. lib. v. cap. 42.

(H) According to this description, the Batavians possessed South Holland, part of the country of Utrecht, and the island of Betaw, in the dukedom of Guelderland.

greatly

greatly surpassed the rest in credit and quality. The former was slain by Fonteius Capito, who falsely charged him with rebellion. The latter was put in irons, and sent to Nero; but declared innocent by Galba, and set at liberty. Under Vitellius he was again in danger of his life, being charged with treason: and hence his hatred to the Romans, which induced him to arm his countrymen against them. As he was a man of great address, lest the Romans should regard him as a public enemy, if he once appeared to have revolted from them, in the beginning of the war between Vitellius and Vespasian, he pretended an attachment to the latter, and was, by letters from Antonius Primus, ordered to oppose the forces summoned to succour Vitellius. Civilis, therefore, determined to revolt, but concealing for the present his intention, contented himself with preventing the Batavian youth from enlisting themselves pursuant to the orders of Vitellius. Soon after, on pretence of celebrating a banquet, he assembled the chiefs of the nation, and the most daring among the populace, in a sacred grove, where, when they had caroused till late in the night, and were warm with liquor, he acquainted them with his real design, displayed the renown of their nation, enumerated the insults they had suffered, the oppression they groaned under, and all the miseries attending a state of servitude. As he was heard with great applause, he bound them all, with many barbarous ceremonies, in a combination.

He then dispatched messengers to the Caninesfates, who inhabited part of the island, to engage them in the same cause. The Caninesfates readily agreed to his measures: choosing for their leader one Brenno, famous for brutal bravery, they took the field; and being joined by the Frisians, a people beyond the Rhine, forced the winter-encampment of two cohorts, and massacred all the Roman victuallers and traders, whom they found confidently rambling about, as in time of peace. In consequence of these hostilities, Civilis, pulling off the mask, and openly associating with the Caninesfates, and Frisians, marched to attack the Romans, who, under the conduct of Aquilius, had retired to the upper part of the island. The conflict was scarce begun, when a band of Tungrians, who served under the Romans, deserted to the enemy. At the same time the Roman fleet, consisting of twenty-four vessels, the rowers being for the most part natives of Batavia, made for the enemy's shore. By these means the Roman forces were easily defeated, put to flight, and inhumanly butchered, both by the enemy, and their own companions. Upon the news of this victory, the Germans immediately dispatched ambaf-

Civilis is joined by the Caninesfates and Frisians.

Puts the Romans to flight.

ambassadors to Civilis, with offers of succours. On the other hand, Hordeonius Flaccus, who commanded the army in Upper Germany, ordered Memmius Lupercus to march against the enemy with two legions, all the cavalry of the Ubians and Treverians, and a squadron of Batavian horse, men long since corrupted in their fidelity to the Romans, but feigning a great zeal for their cause, purposely to betray them in the heat of the fight. The two armies having joined battle, the Batavian cavalry, deserting the legions while they were fighting with great bravery, joined Civilis; then instantly, like enemies, turned upon the Romans. Yet the legionaries, though pressed on all sides, kept their ranks, and stood their ground, till the auxiliary Ubians and Treverians fled in a shameful manner. Against them the Batavians bent their fury and pursuit; a circumstance which gave the legions an opportunity of retiring with safety to the old camp, which is placed by most geographers near the present city of Stanten, in the duchy of Cleves.

Eight Batavian cohorts go over to Civilis.

About the same time the eight Batavian cohorts, which, in obedience to the orders of Vitellius, were upon their march to Rome, being informed of the revolt of their countrymen, and the advantages already gained by them, returned, and took their route towards Lower Germany, to join Civilis. Herennius Gallus, who then governed Bonna, now Bonn, attempted to oppose the passage of the Batavians, at the head of three thousand legionaries, and some cohorts hastily raised; but was defeated with great slaughter. The conquerors pursued their march, without committing any hostilities, and joined Civilis, who now seeing himself at the head of a regular army, but still dreading the formidable power of the Romans, obliged his forces to swear allegiance to Vespasian, and dispatched ambassadors to the two legions in the old camp, requiring them to take the same oath. The answer they returned was, that they would not follow the counsels of a known traitor, nor those of a public enemy; and that a Batavian fugitive must not interfere in the affairs of the Roman state, but prepare to meet the punishment due to his enormous crimes. Civilis, highly provoked at this answer, roused to arms the whole Batavian nation, and being joined by the Bructerans and Tencterans, attacked the camp with great fury. The Romans, though scarce five thousand men, made so vigorous a defence, that Civilis, despairing of success by assault, changed his measures, and blocked them up on all sides, not doubting but they would be soon constrained by famine to capitulate. In the mean time Hordeonius Flaccus, understanding that the camp was besieged, immediately dispatched Pilius Vocula,

Civilis besieges the old camp.

com-

commander of the eighteenth legion, and Herennius Gallus, with powerful succours, to the relief of the two legions: but while these commanders were still encamped at Gelduba upon the Rhine, now Gelnub, a small village near Ordingen, in the territory of Cologne, news were brought them of the defeat of Vitellius at Cremona. In consequence of this event the officers immediately declared for Vespasian, forced the soldiers to swear allegiance to him, and sent Alpinus Montanus to acquaint Civilis with the victory, and desire him to lay down his arms and disband his troops, if he meant to assist Vespasian, since they all had already acknowledged him emperor.

But Civilis had greater objects in view. He therefore openly declared, that he would never sheath his sword till he had redeemed both his own country and Gaul from the tyrannical yoke of the Romans; and that instant dispatched against Vocula the veteran cohorts; and the flower of his German forces, under the command of Julius Maximus and Claudius Victor, husband to his sister. These coming upon the Romans by surprize, put them to flight, and made a dreadful havock. But in the mean time some Gallic bands, lately raised by Galba, arriving at Gelduba, fell upon the enemy in the rear, whilst earnestly pursuing their victory, filled them with dismay, and inspired the Romans with fresh courage; so that they returned to the charge, and, with the assistance of their allies, put the enemy in their turn to flight, and gave them a total overthrow. All the bravest men of the Batavian infantry were cut off; but their horse escaped with the Roman standards and prisoners taken in the beginning of the encounter. Vocula, encouraged by this success, marched against the enemy, employed in besieging the old camp, and, after a bloody conflict, forced them to abandon the enterprize. In the heat of the engagement, Civilis, being thrown by the fall of his horse, was by both armies believed to be dangerously wounded or slain; and to this report chiefly was owing the victory gained by the Romans. Vocula, instead of pursuing the enemy when broken and in disorder, applied himself to fortify the old camp; which having strengthened with some new works, he returned to Gelduba, and thence proceeded to Novesium, now Nuys, where Hordeonius Flaccus lay encamped with part of the army.

*Defeats
Vocula,
and is de-
feated by
the Gal-
licones.*

Vocula was scarce gone, when Civilis again laid siege to the old camp; and advancing with a strong detachment to Gelduba, reduced that place; but he was put to flight by the Roman cavalry near Novesium. In the mean time the soldiers began to mutiny, and claim present payment of their donative;

The Roman soldiers mutiny.

Murder Hordeonius Flaccus, their general.

The Gauls revolt.

donative; for they had learned that the money was already sent thither by Vitellius. Hordeonius immediately complied with their demand; but distributed the money in the name of Vespasian. The soldiers no sooner received it, than they abandoned themselves without controul to every kind of debauchery, to nocturnal revellings and cabals, and when intoxicated with wine, renewed their ancient fury and rage against Hordeonius, who was suspected of favouring Civilis, because, from a mind well disposed towards Vespasian, he had not opposed his first attempts. As none of the general officers dared to check them in the height of their rage, they violently burst into the bedchamber of their general, dragged him out, and put him to death. Vocula would have undergone the same fate, had he not made his escape in the disguise of a slave. They then restored the images of Vitellius, despoiled those of Vespasian, and committed, during that night, innumerable disorders. Their rage, upon the return of day, was succeeded by terror and remorse. The first, the fourteenth, and the eighteenth legions were easily reclaimed by Vocula; and led by him, after they had again taken the oath to Vespasian, against Civilis, who had besieged Magontiacum, now Mentz. Before their arrival the besiegers had retired; but the Romans coming up with them as they marched without order, suspecting no danger, fell upon them sword in hand, and made a dreadful havock of the dispersed and disorderly multitude*.

The death of Vitellius, the murder of Hordeonius, and the burning of the Capitol, being divulged through Germany and Gaul, both these nations engaged in open hostilities against the Roman people. A motley multitude of Cattans, Uspians, Mattiacians, and other German nations, joined Civilis. The Gauls too, seizing the present opportunity, while the Romans were weakened by such successive civil wars, combined to attempt the recovery of their ancient liberty, being strongly inclined by the burning of the Capitol to believe, that the dissolution of the empire was at hand. The city, they said, had formerly been taken by the Gauls; but the mansion of Jupiter having escaped, the empire had continued to subsist. The Druids too animated them with vain oracles, that to nations beyond the Alps the empire of the world was portended. The chief sway among the Gauls was borne at this time by Claficus, Julius Tutor, and Julius Sabinus; the two former Treverians, and the latter a native of Langres. These three, having in private conferences sounded the minds of the rest,

* Tacit. Hist. lib. iv, cap. 12—16.

and engaged in their designs such as they judged proper, came at length to a resolution of throwing off all disguise, and openly declaring against Rome. The only difficulty which occurred, was, how to dispose of the Roman forces then in Gaul. Some were for massacring them all, others for putting to the sword only their commanders, since the common herd, bereft of their leaders, would be easily seduced into the confederacy. The latter opinion prevailed; and this was the result of their first consultation. The conspirators then dispatched incendiaries into all the regions of Gaul, to excite them to war; but in the mean time feigned great respect to Vocula, who was well apprised of their designs; but thought proper to dissemble in his turn, and pursue the same artifices which were used against him. With this view he repaired to Cologne; but Classicus and Tutor, who were both commanders of the Treverian horse, encamping by themselves, and separating the first time from the legions, he returned back, and, with the legions alone, proceeded to Novesium, a numerous body of Gauls having encamped in the open fields about two miles from that place.

To the camp of the Gauls, as hostilities were not yet begun on either side, daily resorted great numbers of Roman soldiers; and there, as they found themselves surrounded with terrors on all sides, they agreed to purchase their own safety by committing an enormity till then unknown among the Romans; which was, to swear allegiance to the Gauls, and promise either to murder, or deliver up their officers in chains. Vocula was not unapprised of what passed in the camp. Judging it beneath him to fly, he assembled the soldiery; and having in vain attempted to divert them from so monstrous a crime, he retired, with a design to put a period to his life; but being restrained by his freedmen and slaves, he was soon after murdered by Æmilius Longinus, a deserter from the first legion, sent by Classicus for that purpose. His lieutenants, Herennius and Numisius, were only put in irons. After this assassination Classicus, assuming the badges of a Roman magistrate, entered the camp, and administered the new oath to the legions, every one swearing allegiance to the sovereignty and empire of the Gauls. Between Tutor and Classicus was shared the charge of managing the war. The former laid siege to Cologne, and forced the inhabitants to take the same oath, which he likewise tendered to all the soldiers who lay farther up the Rhine. Classicus strove to gain, by fair promises, the two legions that were shut up in the ancient camp. After having eaten their horses, and other beasts of burden, they were obliged to support themselves by plucking

The Roman legions murder Vocula, and swear allegiance to the Gauls.

Cologne, and other cities take the same oath.

plucking shrubs and plants, and picking the herbs which sprouted amongst the stones of the walls: but at length, after exhibiting so much glory and patience, they brought a foul stain, by sending deputies to Civilis to beg their lives. Neither were their supplications received, till they had sworn homage and fidelity to the Gauls. Then he granted them their lives; but reserved the plunder of the camp to himself, appointing guards to secure the money, slaves, and baggage, and others to convoy the soldiers thus divested of all their effects. When they had marched about five miles the Germans rushed upon them from an ambush, and cut the greater part of them in pieces. The remainder fled to the camp, which the Germans set on fire; so that such of the unhappy Romans as had survived the late slaughter, were to a man consumed by the flames. Civilis, elated with the success of his arms, soon reduced all the neighbouring cities, some of them being willing to follow his fortune, and others awed by his power.

Julius Sabinus de-seated.

Julius Sabinus having demolished the public tables containing the confederacy with Rome, caused himself to be proclaimed Cæsar; and, leading a large number of his countrymen the Lingones, suddenly invaded the adjacent country of the Sequanians, who continued faithful to the Romans; but being defeated by them, in order to raise a report that he had perished, he set fire to the country dwelling, whither he had fled, and by that stratagem saved his life. By the victory of the Sequanians the fury of the war in Gaul was restrained. The several states began, by degrees, to recover coolness and judgement, the rest following the example of the people of Rheims, who published through the provinces of Gaul an invitation for assembling their several deputies, to consult which conducted most to the good of the whole, war or peace. The assembly was held at Rheims, where Tullius Valentinus, one of the ambassadors of the Treverians, with great vehemence promoted the war; but was opposed by Julius Auspex, one of the chiefs in the state of Rheims, who displayed at large the power of the Romans, and the blessings of peace. They all extolled the courage and resolution of Valentinus, but followed the counsel of Auspex, most of them being deterred from pursuing a general confederacy, by the mutual jealousy and competition of the several provinces. It was asked, where must be the head of the war; whither must they recur for supreme authority? and, should all their pursuits prosper, what place would they choose for the seat

of empire? Some boasted their alliances, some their wealth and forces, others their antiquity; and, from all these, each claimed superior prerogative and rule. At length, after long and warm debates, they agreed to acquiesce in their present condition. To the Treverians letters were immediately dispatched in the name of the states of Gaul, advising them to lay down their arms while their pardon was yet to be procured, and their friends were ready to intercede for them; but Valentinus, a better speaker than commander, opposed this counsel, which the nation rejected accordingly. What chiefly disposed the Gauls to peace was, the news they received, that an army was advancing against them, consisting of four legions from Italy, two from Spain, and one from Britain, under the conduct of two renowned commanders, Annius Gallus and Petilius Cerealis, whom Mucianus had dispatched from Rome, to put a stop to the farther conquests of Civilis and Classicus. Sextilius Felix arrived before them, having, at the head of some auxiliary cohorts, forced a passage through Rhætia. He was joined by the twenty-first legion, and the squadron of horse surnamed the Singular, commanded by Julius Brigtanicus, nephew to Civilis, but hated by his uncle.

*The Gauls
resolve
upon peace.*

With these forces Felix attacked and routed the Treverians, commanded by Tutor near Bingium, now Bingen; and in a few days obliged the Tribocians, the Vaugiones, the Cercatians, and the Nemetians, to desert their countrymen, and return to the Roman dominion. After he had thus made himself master of the countries bordering on the Rhine, from Mentz to the present city of Basil, the legions who had revolted to the Gauls, renewed the oath of allegiance to Vespasian; and, leaving Treves, where they were then quartered, retired to Metz, a city in alliance with the Romans. In the mean time Petilius Cerealis arrived at Magontiacum, where being informed, that Valentinus was posted at Rigodulum, now Rigol, with a numerous band of Treverians, he drew into one body the soldiers he found at Magontiacum, with the forces he had brought over the Alps; then marching to Rigodulum, he attacked the enemy's intrenchments, though inclosed by the mountains, and the river Moselle, and strengthened with deep trenches, and ramparts of huge stones. The Treverians fought for some time with great resolution; but were, in the end, forced to abandon their camp, and save themselves by flight. The Romans pursued them, and, in the pursuit, took many persons of great distinction; and amongst them Valentinus their general. Next day Cerealis entered Treves; which city the soldiers passionately desired.

*The Tre-
verians
routed by
Sextilius
Felix;*

*and by Ce-
realis.*

*The return
of the le-
gions,
which had
sworn al-
legiance to
the Gauls.*

ed to raze, as the birth-place of Clasticus and Tutor; but Cerealis, dreading licentiousness and cruelty, checked their rage. Their attention was likewise diverted by another object, the arrival of the legions, which had sworn allegiance to the Gauls. They appeared sad and dejected, keeping their eyes immoveably fixed upon the ground, and imploring their pardon by silence and weeping, till Cerealis comforted them, ascribing their desertion to the inevitable operations of fate, and assuring them, that neither he nor the emperor would remember their past offences. At the same time he caused an order to be published throughout the camp, that no one should, upon any dispute, reproach his fellow-foldier¹.

*The Roman
intrench-
ments tak-
en.*

*The gallant
conduct of
Cerealis.*

Civilis, Tutor, and Clasticus, having from different quarters assembled all their forces, attacked unexpectedly the intrenchments of the legions now at the gates of Treves, forced them, put the cavalry to flight, and seized the bridge of communication over the Moselle in the midst of the city. News of this general rout and havock being brought to Cerealis, while yet in bed, he started up, and, undaunted by all this confusion and distress, strove with his own hand to stop the fugitives; animated them by his example; and, heading such as were remarkably brave, recovered the bridge, and secured it by a guard of armed men. Then, hastening to the camp, and rallying the dispersed legions, he not only repulsed the enemy, but the same day forced their intrenchments, and recovered the city of Cologne, where he found the wife and sister of Civilis, with the son of Clasticus². Civilis, having after this unfortunate event recruited his forces with incredible expedition, posted himself in the old camp, where he was attacked by Cerealis, reinforced by the accession of three legions. But, as the surrounding fields were naturally marshy, and Civilis had diverted the course of the Rhine, which thence flooded all the neighbouring grounds, the Romans were easily repulsed, and their cavalry put to flight, by some German squadrons falling out against them.

*Civilis re-
ceives a
total over-
throw.*

By the issue of this encounter, both the leaders were prompted, though from different motives, to put the whole to the issue of a general battle; Civilis eager to pursue his good fortune, Cerealis to cancel his dishonour. The next day both armies appeared early in the field, and engaged with equal fury and resolution. After the conflict had lasted many hours, the Germans were in the end defeated; and the war would have been finished that day, had not

¹ Tacit. lib. iv. cap. 71—77.

² Idem ibid. cap. 78.

the conquerors been prevented, by night, and a sudden storm, from pursuing the flying foe. After this overthrow, Civilis withdrew to the island of the Batavians: Classicus, Tutor, and an hundred and thirteen senators of Treves, crossed the Rhine to raise new forces. Their endeavours were attended with such success, that they returned with a vast multitude, and at the same time assaulted the Roman forces posted at Avenacum, Vade, Grinnes, and Batavodurum, now Arnhem, Wageningen, Rhenen, and Duerstede. They were repulsed at each attack with great slaughter, and forced to throw themselves precipitately into the river. Notwithstanding this disappointment and defeat, Civilis, a short time after, in the dead of night, stormed the camp of Cerealis, upon the banks of the Rhine, made a dreadful havock of the Roman soldiers, while, apprised of no danger, they were reposing in their tents, and carried off a great number of captives. The general, half-awake, and almost naked, escaped through a mistake of the enemy; for they had carried off the admiral's ship, distinguished by its flag, from a belief, that Cerealis was in it: but he had passed that night in the embraces of Claudia Sacrata, a native of Cologne. The centinels excused their own negligence by the dishonour of their general, alleging, that they were enjoined to keep silence for fear of interrupting his repose; so that, as speaking was restrained, they had fallen asleep.

He surprises the Romans;

Notwithstanding this advantage, Civilis was in the end obliged even to abandon his own island, and retire beyond the Rhine. Cerealis committed dreadful ravages throughout the island of the Batavians; but, through a policy usual to generals, left all the lands and dwellings of Civilis untouched, tempting at the same time the Batavians with an offer of peace, and Civilis with a promise of pardon: this he resolved to accept, finding his countrymen tired of the war, and inclined to prevent the desolation and ruin of the whole nation, by devoting him to punishment. He therefore desired a conference, which was granted: the bridge upon the river Wahal was broken down in the middle; and the two generals, stepping forward on each side, stood upon the opposite extremities. The issue of this conference was, an entire submission on one side, and an unreserved pardon on the other. The Batavians remained in the same condition they were in before the war broke out, that is, exempt from all tributes, and only obliged to supply the Romans with troops when required^a.

but is obliged to abandon his own island, and submit to the Romans.

^a Joseph. Bell. Jud. lib. ii. cap. 11.

*Vespasian
and Titus
consuls.*

During these transactions in Germany, Vespasian and Titus commenced consuls, the former the second time, and both absent. The senate was therefore assembled on the first of January by Julius Frontinus, city-prætor, when they decreed, that public thanks should be returned to the general officers, to the armies, and to the confederate kings, for having zealously espoused the cause of Vespasian. From Tertius Julianus they took away the prætorship, for having forsaken his legion, when going to declare for Vespasian, and transferred that dignity to Plotius Griphus. Upon Hormus, Vespasian's freedman, they conferred the equestrian dignity. Soon after, Frontinus resigned his office, which was assumed by Domitian, whose name was prefixed to all letters and edicts; but the whole sway remained in Mucianus. The young prince, however, boldly exerted many acts of power, at the instigation of his intimates, or his own caprice^t. Antonius Primus and Arrius Varus gave Mucianus great umbrage: they were both renowned for their late exploits in war, in great credit with the soldiery, and beloved by the populace. Antonius was besides reported to have solicited Scribonianus Crassus, the brother of Piso, whom Galba had adopted, to assume the sovereignty. Mucianus, therefore, finding he could not openly crush Primus, pretended great friendship and esteem for him, and flattered him with praises in the senate, made him great promises in private, and filled him with hopes of obtaining the government of Hither Spain, void by the departure of Cluvius Rufus. Having thus entirely gained him, he dismissed the seventh legion, which was inviolably attached to him, to their winter-quarters, at a great distance from Rome; and sent the third legion back into Syria, and the rest of the forces into Germany, to serve under Cerealis. Having by these means quite broken the power of Primus, and disburdened the city of those who were apt to raise tumults and disorder, Rome returned to her former tranquillity, the laws resumed their force, and the magistrates their wonted functions^u.

*Domitian
prætor.*

*Tranquillity
restored to
Rome.*

*Domitian
goes the
first time
to the se-
nate.*

Domitian, appearing for the first time in the senate, spoke in few words, and with great modesty, of the absence of his father and brother, and also concerning his own youth and insufficiency. Then he proposed, that all the honours which had been bestowed on Galba, but afterwards abrogated by Otho, should be restored. Curtius Montanus moved, that some public mark of honour should be likewise paid to the memory of Piso. The fathers ordained both;

^t Tacit. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 39.

^u Idem. lib. v. cap. 11.

but of what regarded Piso, nothing was executed. In the next place commissioners were drawn by lot, who were to cause restitution to be made of whatever had been usurped by violence during the war, and to restrain the public expences. To Tertius Julianus, as soon as it was known that he had joined Vespasian, the office of prætor was restored; but Griphus still retained the ensigns of that dignity. Before the assembly broke up, one of the senators, named Junius Mauricus, petitioned Domitian, that he would impart to the senate the registers of the late emperors, that they might thence discover who had solicited to be admitted accusers, and against whom: but the young prince judiciously replied, that, in an affair of this sort, the sentiments of the emperor must be first obtained. However, P. Egnatius Celer, the accuser of the celebrated Soranus Barca, was condemned; but Mucianus haranguing in behalf of the informers, and exhorting the fathers to obliterate the impressions of all resentment, and forget the grievances arising from the necessity of the late times, all farther prosecutions were dropped *.

Mucianus speaks for the accusers.

This year Mucianus ordered the son of Vitellius to be put to death, pretending, that civil discord would never cease, unless the seeds of war were utterly extinguished. He treated Antonius Primus with such haughtiness, that he forced him to retire from Rome, and recur to Vespasian, by whom he was received without any particular marks of friendship or disfavour, the emperor's mind being swayed, on one side, by the great services of that commander; on the other, by letters from Mucianus. The other courtiers at the same time combined to disgrace him, charging him with arrogance, and heightening the charge with the enormities of his former life. He did not fail to create new enemies by his haughty carriage; for, with excessive ostentation, he used to recount his own exploits, treating the other commanders with the utmost contempt, especially Cæcina, whom he used to revile as a captive, and a man of no spirit, who had tamely submitted. Hence, by degrees, he sunk in his character; but, from the emperor, retained to the last some appearance of favour. Of him we find no farther mention made by the ancient writers. Mucianus likewise displaced Arrius Varus, commander of the prætorian guards; but bestowed upon him another, that of supplying the city with grain, which had been formerly discharged by persons of the first quality. To soften Domitian, who had a great kindness for Varus, he bestowed the

Antonius Primus repairs to Vespasian.

* Tacit. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 40—44.

command of the guards upon Arretinus Clemens, a person nearly allied to the house of Vespasian. The father of Arretinus had discharged the same trust with great credit under Caligula, whence his name was in high estimation with the soldiery. The guards had been hitherto commanded by a Roman knight; but Arretinus was by rank a senator.

*Vespasian
works some
miracles.*

Vespasian continued at Alexandria, and is said to have wrought some miracles in that city (I). From Alexandria he

† Tacit. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 68.

(I) A blind man, well known at Alexandria, prostrating himself at the emperor's feet, imploring him to restore him to sight, telling the prince, that he had been warned by the god Serapis to repair to him, and beg that, with his spittle, he would condescend to wash his cheeks, and the balls of his eyes. Another, lame in his hand, by the direction of the same god, prayed him to tread upon it. Vespasian at first desisted them; but, as they continued to importune him, he began to waver, fearing on one side the imputation of vanity, and on the other drawn into hopes through the intreaties of the suppliants, and the arguments of flatterers. At length, considering himself as an instrument chosen by the gods to accomplish the cure, he undertook the task with a cheerful countenance before a great multitude, intent upon the issue. Instantly the lame hand recovered full strength, and upon the eyes of the blind light broke in. Tacitus assures us, that, even in his time, both these events continued to be recounted and averred by those who had been eye-witnesses of them, and could reap no advantage

from their flattery. Vespasian was hence seized with an eager desire of visiting the residence of the deity, in order to consult him on the state and fortune of the empire. He therefore commanded all to retire from the temple, and then entered himself. While he was there, he suddenly perceived one of the grandees of Egypt, named Basilides, standing by him, though he knew him to be then at a great distance from Alexandria, and confined by sickness. However, he examined the priests, whether Basilides had that day entered the temple; asked such as he met, whether he had been seen in the city; then by horsemen, purposely dispatched, he learnt, that Basilides was at that instant eighty miles from thence (†). St. Austin, without questioning the truth of these facts, attested by several writers of great authority, observes, that Vespasian, according to Tacitus's account, ordered the physicians to examine first, whether such lameness and blindness were curable by human aid; who reported, that, in the one, the power of sight was not wholly extinct, but would return, were the obstacles removed; and, in the other, the

(†) Tacit. lib. iv. cap. 81. Dio, lib. lxxvi. p. 748. Suet. in Vesp. cap. 7.

he sailed for Italy; and, having visited in his passage the island of Rhodes, and several cities of Asia Minor, landed, according to Josephus, on the south side of the promontory of Iapygia or Otranto. At Brundisium he was met by Mucianus, and a great number of senators and Roman knights; and at Beneventum by his son Domitian. On his route to Rome, he was received every where with loud acclamations; for every one entertained an exalted opinion of his virtues, and looked upon him as sent by the gods to restore the empire to its former lustre or tranquility. As he approached the city, the greater part of the inhabitants flocked out to congratulate and conduct him in triumph to the Capitol, the streets through which he passed being strewed with flowers, and the whole city, like a temple, filled with precious odours and perfumes. Altars were every where raised, and victims slain, with supplications to the gods, that Vespasian might rule the empire many years, and his son Titus reign after him; that the sovereignty might for ever remain in his family, and Rome flourish under their auspices and authority ².

Arrives in Italy.

How received at Rome.

Great expectations were formed of Vespasian by all ranks of men, and no one was disappointed in his expectation: for he made it his whole business to re-establish the commonwealth, and restore the empire to its former grandeur; to conform to the laws, and see that all others conformed to them; to consult the good of the whole, and of individuals; to prevent oppression, and to punish it; to promote virtue, and reward it; to enforce the observance of the laws by his example, as well as by his judgements; and to merit the affections and fidelity of the people, by his paternal care and impartiality. His first task was, to revive the ancient discipline in the army; for the soldiery had abandoned themselves to all manner of licentiousness, and committed innumerable disorders, not only in the colonies and municipal towns, but in Rome itself. He therefore disbanded

Revives the ancient discipline.

² Joseph. Bell. Jud. lib. vii. cap. 20.

joints were only distorted, and might be restored with regular pressure. Hence St. Austin concludes, that such cures were not above the power of men, and much less above that of the evil spirits, endowed with a superior knowledge, and on this

occasion exerting it, to eclipse, if possible, the miracles wrought by the apostles and their disciples (2). As for the vision in the temple, it might well have been the effect of a warm and strong imagination.

(2) S. Aug. Civit. Dei, lib. x. cap. 16.

great numbers of them, especially such as had served under Vitellius, and had been long inured to rapine and licentiousness; in the others he punished the least transgressions with the utmost severity. A young nobleman, to whom he had given a considerable command, waiting upon him to return thanks, and smelling fragrantly of rich oils and perfumes, the emperor, with a voice expressing his indignation, told him, that he had rather he had smelt of garlic; and took away the commission which he had given him a few days before. He was no less severe with the marines, who were appointed to carry letters and dispatches from Puteoli and Ostia to Rome; for, upon their petitioning him to have some allowance, besides their usual pay, for shoes, instead of complying with their request, he ordered, that for the future they should discharge their duty barefoot; and caused this ordinance to be immediately put in execution ^a.

His conduct towards the senate.

He seldom failed to assist at the debates and deliberations of the senate, without assuming any authority above the other senators, whom he frequently exhorted to speak their sentiments with freedom; telling them, that he had called them not blindly to approve what was his will and pleasure, but to receive their counsel, to trust and to follow it. Having taken upon him, soon after his arrival at Rome, the office of censor, he degraded such of the senators and knights as he found unworthy of their dignities; and supplied their places with such persons, either from the colonies or provinces, as were recommended to him by men of known integrity. By these means he increased the number of senators to a thousand, which, by repeated massacres, had been reduced to two hundred ^b. He likewise strictly examined into all the courts of judicature, and reformed innumerable abuses and grievances, appointed new judges, and caused the laws to be digested and reduced to a moderate compass. He frequently administered justice in the forum with great impartiality, and universal applause.

Embellishes the city.

As Rome had lost much of its splendor by the late conflagrations, and many houses lay still in ruins, he commanded the proprietors to rebuild them in a limited time, allowing any one to take possession of the ground, if the edifices were not raised within that term to a certain height. The Capitol he had ordered to be rebuilt before he left Alexandria; and appointed Lucius Vestinus, a Roman knight, to direct and oversee the work. By him were assembled the soothsayers, who declared, that the remains of

^a Suet. cap. 8, 9.

^b Dio, lib. lxvi. p. 666.

the former temple should be removed into the marshes; that upon the same foundations the new building should be raised; and that to the temple nothing new, except height, should be added. With this variation the new temple was raised in a short time; and this alone was judged wanting to the magnificence of the former. As the late fire had destroyed many public records, he restored three thousand tables of brass, which had been melted, having with indefatigable pains found out their true copies. In these were recorded all the decrees of the senate, all the ordinances of the people, all treaties, alliances, and privileges, granted to any person or city, and all remarkable occurrences, from the foundation of Rome. In these and the like useful works he expended great sums.

He was so far from seeking the destruction of any man, that he could not behold, without sighs and tears, even the greatest criminals led to execution. To all he was courteous and affable, allowing persons of every rank to accost him with freedom, the gates of his palace being kept constantly open. Far from concealing the meanness of his former condition, he frequently discoursed of it, and used to deride those who, to flatter him, undertook to derive his pedigree from the founders of Reate, and the companions of Hercules. He despised titles, and, with much difficulty, was prevailed upon to accept that of the father of his country; a title to which no one had ever a better claim. The king of Parthia having written to him thus, "Arsaces, king of kings, to Flavius Vespasianus;" he, without finding fault with the title, or resenting it as an affront, directed his answer thus; "Flavius Vespasianus, to Arsaces, king of kings;" shewing thereby in what contempt he held such titles. He was so far from being dazzled with the splendor of public honours, that, when he triumphed with his son Titus over the Jews, being quite fatigued with the length of that ceremony, he was heard to say, that he deservedly suffered for having, at his age, desired a triumph, as if such an honour had ever been due to his ancestors, or hoped for by himself. He bore with incredible patience the many lampoons that were dispersed all over the town, reflecting upon his avarice; and the invectives of the philosophers, whom he had banished the city (K). He gave no ear to

His clemency, and other good qualities.

(K) One of these, a Cynic, named Demetrius, meeting him one day out of town, reviled him in a most outrageous manner; but the good emperor, in-
stead of chastising him for his insolent behaviour, contented himself with telling him, that he was a Cynic indeed,

whif-

whisperers, nor ever put any one to death, whose crimes were not notorious, and plainly proved (L). Though several conspiracies were formed against him, yet he could not be prevailed upon to punish the conspirators with death, saying, that they deserved rather pity than punishment, since they knew not what a burden the empire was. He took the daughter of Vitellius, his inveterate enemy, under his protection, married her into a noble family, and allowed her a large dower.

He forgets injuries.

He never sought to revenge the affronts which he had suffered in the reign of Nero; but generously forgave all who had injured or reviled him. Being in that prince's reign forbid the court, he had recourse to Phœbus, the emperor's freedman, asking him, whither he should go. Phœbus returned him no other answer, but that he might hang himself; and thrust him out of his room. The freedman coming to implore his pardon after he was made emperor, Vespasian was provoked no farther, than to bid him be gone in the same terms. Though Mucianus assumed far greater authority than was suitable to the rank of a private man, and behaved with much haughtiness towards the emperor, boasting, that in his own hands he had held the empire, but freely bestowed it upon Vespasian; yet the emperor never rebuked him but in private; and having once complained of him to a common friend, he ended his complaints with these remarkable words; "For I myself am but a man, and consequently not free from blame."

Is generally charged with avarice.

The only fault with which he is charged by the ancients, is his immoderate love of money, which he was not ashamed to procure by means altogether unworthy of a great prince. He not only revived the old impositions and taxes, which had been suppressed by Galba; but loaded the provinces with new tributes: he bought commodities, that he might sell them to advantage; and descended to some very low and unusual imposts, laying one even upon urine; which gave occasion to his son Titus to remonstrate against the meanness of such an imposition; but he, presenting the first money that accrued from that tax to his son, asked him, whether the smell offended him. Neither did he

c Suet. cap. 8, 9, 11, 12, 14.

(L) His friends having besought him to beware of Mectius Pomposianus, who was born, they said, under a constellation that promised him the empire, he immediately named him con-

ful, adding pleasantly, "When he is invested with the sovereignty, he will, I hope; remember my friendship, and requite it."

scruple

scruple the selling of any office, nor pardoning any criminal, however enormous his offences were, provided he could with a sum of money redeem himself from the deserved punishment. He is said to have preferred to the most profitable employments such of his officers as were noted for their avarice and rapaciousness, and to have made use of them as sponges, "by wetting them when they were dry, and squeezing them when they were wet^d." He often strove to disguise his avarice by a joke. Thus certain ambassadors having acquainted him, that by the council of their nation, a considerable sum of money was decreed for erecting him a statue in the form of a colossus, "Here is the basis (said he, stretching out his hand); lay the money down here, and the statue is reared (L)."

Several instances of it.

Some writers think, that he was naturally covetous; and tell us, that he was upbraided with avarice by an old herdsman, who, earnestly intreating the emperor, upon his accession to the empire, to grant him his liberty without ransom, and being denied it, cried out so as to be heard by the whole multitude, "The wolf may change his hair, but not his qualities." Other authors excuse him on account of the urgent necessities of the state, and the emptiness of the exchequer, when he first came to the government; for he then publicly declared in the senate, that the republic could not subsist without a supply of a hundred and forty millions of sesterces. This is, by the generality of writers, thought the most probable opinion, because he always employed his

Is by many cleared from that imputation.

^d Suet. in Vesp. cap. 16.

(L) One of his favourites having one day begged of him the superintendence of his household for one whom he pretended to be his brother, the emperor evaded his request for the present; and, sending afterwards for the person whom he had recommended, he received of him the sum, which was to have been paid to the other for his interest, and bestowed on him the employment. When the favourite returned to solicit in behalf of his pretended brother, "You must find out another brother (answered the em-

peror); for the person, whom you recommended, proves in the end to be my brother, and not your's." One day, while he was travelling in a litter, the muleteer stopped, under pretence of having his mules shod, but in reality to give an opportunity to a person of accosting the emperor, and craving some favour. Of this Vespasian was apprised; and therefore, having pleasantly asked the muleteer what he had received for shoeing his mules, he obliged him to account for half the sum (1).

(1) Suet. in Vesp. cap. 16.

revenue

*Influences
of his ge-
nerosity.*

revenue to great and noble purposes, and laid it out **with** uncommon generosity. His public works and edifices **were** very expensive; his presents and pensions numerous; his feasts and entertainments frequent and magnificent. He supported a great number of poor senators; allowed five hundred thousand sesterces a-year to every decayed consular; restored to their former lustre a great many towns, that had been ruined by fire or earthquakes; and repaired the public roads and aqueducts. He was a great encourager of learning, and the first who settled salaries upon the professors of rhetoric, to be paid yearly out of the exchequer. He invited to Rome, with liberal allowances, not only the most celebrated poets, but such artificers and workmen as were famous in any part of the world. Of the latter, one skilled in mechanics having offered to convey certain columns of vast weight into the capital at a very small charge, the emperor rewarded him for his invention; but would not employ him, saying, we must not debar the common people from earning their livelihood*. Such was in general the conduct of Vespasian. We shall now proceed to the most remarkable actions of his reign, digested according to the order of time.

*Triumphs
over the
Jews,
with his
son Titus;*

Though Vespasian had, during his first consulship, restored Rome to her former tranquillity, yet he did not resign the fasces on the first of January; but choosing for his colleague M. Cocceius Nerva, afterwards emperor, continued to discharge that office till the calends of March, when he was succeeded by his son Domitian, as was Nerva by Q. Pedius Castus. This year Titus having, by the taking of Jerusalem, entirely reduced the Jewish nation, returned to Rome; where he was received with all possible demonstrations of joy, and honoured with a triumph, which was decreed by the senate both to him and his father; for Vespasian had begun that war with great success. They both triumphed about the latter end of April, displaying on that occasion all the wealth of the Jewish nation. To Titus was likewise decreed a triumphal arch, describing his noble exploits; which continues to this day almost entire, as a lasting monument of his victories over the Jews. The triumph was no sooner over, than Vespasian commanded the temple of Janus to be shut, a profound peace now reigning in every part of the empire. Soon after, he began the temple of Peace, which being finished in four years, the spoils of the temple of Jerusalem were there deposited. Titus, before his arrival at Rome, had been honoured by his father

* Suet. in Vesp. cap. 17, 18.

with

with the title of emperor, and taken for his colleague in the tribunitial power; so that being, in a manner, his partner in the empire, he discharged all the functions of sovereignty. He even took upon him the command of the prætorian guards, by which means that office became, as Aurelius Victor observes, the most honourable employment in the whole empire.

to whom he imparts the tribunitial power.

Cesennius Pætus, whom Vespasian had appointed governor of Syria in the room of Mucianus, having written to the emperor, that Antiochus, king of Comagene, and his son Epiphanes, had held private conferences with Vologeses, king of the Parthians, and were disposed to revolt from the Romans, the emperor, without examining the charge, which Josephus suspects to have been quite groundless, allowed Pætus to take what measures he thought most proper. In consequence of this permission, Pætus, who bore some private animosity to Antiochus, entered his dominions in a hostile manner; and being joined by Aristobulus, king of Chalcis, and Sohemus, king of Emefus, seized Samosata, the metropolis of Comagene, defeated Epiphanes and Callinicus, the two sons of Antiochus, and obliged the king himself to take shelter in Cilicia, where he possessed some domains. The young princes found a safe asylum at the court of Vologeses, who entertained them in a manner suitable to their rank; but Antiochus was, by order of Pætus, seized in Cilicia, and loaded with chains, a circumstance which Vespasian no sooner knew, than he commanded him to be set at liberty. His kingdom, however, was reduced to a Roman province, known by the name of Auguſteuphrateſiana, or Euphrateſiana, because it extended along the Euphrates. Antiochus was allowed to retire to Lacedæmon, whence he removed soon after to Rome; where both he and his two sons, whom Vespasian took under his protection, at the recommendation of the Parthian king, were supported suitable to their rank at the public charge.

Comagene reduced to a Roman province.

In the following year, Domitian being consul the second time, with Valerius Meſſialinus, Vespasian reduced Greece, which Nero had declared free, and likewise Lycia, Rhodes, Byzantium, Samos, Thrace, and Cilicia, to Roman provinces, alleging, that they were no longer capable of liberty, since they only made use of it to undo themselves by their intestine dissensions. This year Vespasian condemned to banishment the celebrated Helvidius Priscus. He was

Vespasian reduces Greece, &c.

† Joseph. lib. vii. cap. 9. & lib. vi. cap. 29. Suet. lib. viii. cap. 8. Chron. Alexandr. p. 587.

a native

*Helvidius
Priscus
banished.*

a native of Terracina, and the son of a centurion : but, by his shining talents, soon distinguished himself in Rome. When he was very young; he applied himself to the study of philosophy, not, as many did in those days, to disguise indolence under a pompous name, but in order to engage in the public administration with a mind fortified against all disasters. Before he had risen higher than the quaestorship, he was chosen by the famous Thrasea Pætus for a husband to his daughter. From the character of his wife's father he copied nothing so studiously, as his undaunted liberty in speaking his sentiments, never to be shaken by fear, and ever immovable in what he judged conducive to the public welfare. When Thrasea was condemned, he was driven into exile, but recalled by Galba, and honoured by Vespasian, in the first year of his reign, with the prætorship. He spoke with great freedom in the senate against the arbitrary proceedings of Galba, Otho, and Vitellius; neither did he spare Vespasian, but inveighed against him with as much bitterness as his father-in-law had ever spoke

*His strange
behaviour.*

against Nero. The emperor, however, patiently bore with him, till he began openly to solemnize the birth-day of Brutus and that of Cassius; to encourage the people to follow their example, and attempt the recovery of their ancient liberty : then Vespasian caused him to be seized; but soon after dismissed him unhurt, contrary to the advice of all his friends. Helvidius, forgetful of the kindness the emperor had shewn him, pursued his former course; and was again accused, and condemned to banishment. As he could not refrain, even in the place of his exile, from exclaiming with great bitterness against the emperor, he was at length by the senate sentenced to death. Vespasian endeavoured to save him, and sent orders to countermand the execution; but they came too late, Mucianus having detained the messengers, under various pretences, till the sentence was put in execution ^g.

*Is sentenced
to death by
the senate,
and executed.*

*The last
census.*

Vespasian being consul the fifth time, and Titus the third, nothing memorable happened during their administration, except the census, which was performed by them in quality of censors, the emperor having taken his son for his colleague in that dignity. This is the last census we find mentioned in history ^h. They both retained the saces till the calends of April of the following year, when Vespasian resigned them to Domitian, and Titus to Mucianus. At this period the emperor consecrated the temple of Peace, and

^g Dio, in Excerpt. Val. p. 705. col. 66. p. 750. Sueton. cap. 15. Plin. lib. vii. ep. 19. ^h Cenforinus de die natali.

raised a colossus of brass one hundred and ten feet high, which had been designed for Nero; but instead of his head, that of Titus was placed upon it, or, as others assert, the figure of the Sun¹. In the two following years, Vespasian being consul the seventh and eighth time, and Titus the fifth and sixth, nothing happened at Rome, or in any part of the empire, which authors have thought worth transmitting to posterity.

L. Ceionius Commodus and D. Novius Priscus being consuls, the celebrated Cneius Julius Agricola was sent into Britain, to govern that province in the room of Julius Frontinus. As we shall have frequent occasion to speak of this renowned commander, we shall here briefly recount his course of life and pursuits, before he distinguished himself by his memorable exploits in this island. He was born in the colony of Forojulium, now Frejus, in Narbonne Gaul; and both his grandfathers were procurators to the emperors; a dignity peculiar to the equestrian order. His father, Julius Græcinus, was a senator famous for his eloquence and philosophy, put to death by Caligula for refusing to accuse Marcus Silanus. His mother, Julia Agricola, a woman remarkable for her modesty, brought him up in his tender years under her eye, and with great care. In his early youth he studied philosophy and law in the city of Marseilles, with more assiduity, as he himself used to declare, than became a Roman, and a senator, till the discretion of his mother checked his ardour. Reason and age afterwards qualified his heat; so that he contented himself with a limited measure of philosophy. He learned the first rudiments of war in Britain, under Suetonius Paulinus, one of the greatest commanders of his age, by whom he was distinguished with particular marks of friendship and esteem. He was not one of those young men who turn warfare into riot; but studied to acquaint himself with the province, to be known to the army, to learn of such as had experience, to follow such as were worthy and brave, to seek for no exploits from ostentation, to refuse none through fear. He would not assume the title and office of tribune, till he thought himself well qualified for that command: neither did he make use of it, as many did in those days, to indulge his pleasures with more liberty, or to absent himself from duty; but to encourage others, by his example, to bear with patience the toils attending the profession of arms. As Paulinus was engaged in a dangerous war with the Britons, Agricola had an op-

*Julius
Agricola
sent into
Britain.*

*His birth,
education,
&c.*

¹ Plin. lib. xxxiv. cap. 7.

portunity of improving himself in the knowledge of military affairs under so great a master.

*His prefer-
ments.*

Departing from Britain to Rome, to enter upon the public offices, he was first sent into Asia as quaestor, where he had Salvius Titianus for proconsul, but neither the province, in itself very rich, nor Titianus, though bent upon all acts of rapine, and ready, upon the smallest encouragement, to have purchased a mutual connivance in iniquity, corrupted his probity. He was afterwards created tribune of the people; but passed the year of his tribuneship in repose and inactivity, well apprised, that, under Nero, sloth was the best security. With the like indolence he held the praetorship, exhibiting, however, as was incumbent upon the praetors, public sports, according to the measure of his wealth, not favouring of prodigality, but still deserving popular applause. Being afterwards appointed by Galba to survey the gifts and oblations belonging to the temples, by a diligent search, he procured full restitution of all, except what had been sacrilegiously taken away by Nero. In the year following, his mother was killed by the soldiers of Otho, upon her estate at Intemelium, now Ventimiglia; and the estate itself plundered, with great part of her treasure, which had proved the cause of the murder. As Agricola hastened from Rome, to solemnize her funeral, he received intelligence upon the road, that Vespasian had assumed the title of emperor, and instantly espoused his party. Upon his return from Intemelium, he was employed by Mucianus to levy forces; and, as he discharged that trust with great uprightness and fidelity, he was preferred to the command of the twentieth legion, then in Britain, their own commander being found void of authority to keep them to their duty. Vettius Bolanus was at that time governor of Britain; but, as he ruled with great gentleness, Agricola had no opportunity of distinguishing himself by any military exploits. Bolanus was succeeded by Petilius Cerealis, who attacked the Brigantes, the most powerful people of the whole island; and, after many encounters, some of which proved very bloody, held most part of their country by conquest, or continued to ravage it by war. Under him Agricola had opportunities to display his valour and abilities.

*Raised to
the rank of
a patri-
cian.
Honoured
with the
consulship.*

Upon his return from Britain, where he had commanded a legion, he was by Vespasian raised to the rank of a patrician, and afterwards appointed governor of Aquitain; which trust he discharged with great justice and ability. He was after three years recalled, and honoured with the consulship; which office he enjoyed during the two last months of the preceding year. Before he ended his consulship, he

con-

contracted his daughter to Tacitus the historian, who was yet very young, and gave her to him in marriage as soon as he had resigned the fasces. He was then immediately promoted to the government of Britain, and at the same time honoured with the pontifical dignity *.

Promoted to the government of Britain.

Vespasian being consul the ninth time, and Titus the seventh, Julius Sabinus, who, as we have already related, had caused himself to be proclaimed Cæsar, was at length discovered, seized, and put to death. After his defeat, he had fled to his country-dwelling, and set it on fire, in order to raise a report, that he had perished: and indeed he was there believed to have suffered a voluntary death; but he lay concealed with his treasures (for he was immensely rich) in a cave, which he had caused to be dug in a solitary place, and which was known only to two of his freedmen, upon whose fidelity he could depend. He might have easily withdrawn into Germany; but could not prevail upon himself to abandon his wife Empona, whom he tenderly loved. Sabinus did not for some time even undeceive his wife, who solemnized his exequies with great pomp, bewailed him with many tears, and at last, no longer able to bear the loss of her husband, resolved not to outlive him, and began to abstain from all food. Alarmed at this resolution, Sabinus, by means of Martialis, one of his freedmen, informed her, that he was still alive; and acquainted her with the place where he lay concealed, cautioning her at the same time to suppress her joy, lest the secret might be thence betrayed. Empona, though in the utmost transports of joy, continued to lament him as dead; but, in the mean time, passed great part of the night with him, and sometimes whole weeks, pretending business in the country. She had even two children by him, who were born and brought up in the cave. She concealed the whole with exemplary fidelity, and wonderful address: she even found means to convey him in disguise to Rome, upon what motive we know not, and from thence back to his cave.

The adventures of Julius Sabinus.

After he had passed nine years in this condition, he was at length discovered by some persons, who narrowly watched his wife, upon her being frequently absent, and followed her to the cave, without being discovered. Sabinus was immediately seized, and sent to Rome, loaded with chains, together with his wife, who, throwing herself at the emperor's feet, and presenting to him her two children, endeavoured with her tears and entreaties to move him to compassion. Vespasian could not forbear weeping at so

He is discovered.

* Tacit, Vit. Agric. cap. 9.

*and put to
death with
his wife.*

moving an object; but nevertheless condemned both her and her husband, and caused them to be soon after executed. The two children were saved, and with great care brought up at the public expence.

*Cæcina and
Marcellus
conspire
against Vespasian;*

Not long after the execution of Sabinus, Alienus Cæcina, of whom we have often spoken in the reign of Vitellius, and Eprius Marcellus, an abandoned accuser in the reign of Nero, entered into a conspiracy against the emperor, and drew into it great numbers of the prætorian guards: but before the conspiracy was ripe for execution, one of the conspirators betrayed the whole to Titus, and even delivered a copy of the speech which Cæcina was to pronounce to the soldiers after the assassination, written with his own hand.

*but are put
to death.*

This was sufficient evidence; and therefore Titus, the night after this discovery, having invited Cæcina to supper, caused him, without any farther enquiry or trial, to be murdered in the banqueting-room. Marcellus was tried and condemned by the senate; but prevented the execution of the sentence, by cutting his throat with a razor¹. Before Vespasian resigned the consulship, he was seized with a pain in his bowels, which obliged him to repair from Campania, where he then was, to Rome; and from thence to Cutylia, his paternal estate in the neighbourhood of Reate, which he visited every summer, in order to drink certain waters, in great reputation on account of their extreme coolness. Here he was seized first with a fever, and afterwards with a flux, occasioned by the immoderate use of cold water, which brought him so low, that all about him began to despair of his recovery. However, he still attended business, received ambassadors, and gave audience to his ministers. Once, as he found himself ready to faint, "If I am not mistaken, (he cried out), I am going to be a god," ridiculing the custom of the Romans, who placed their emperors, after death, in the number of their gods, and honoured them with divine worship. Upon the approach of death, he cried out with his usual bravery and resolution, "An emperor ought to die standing:" but while he endeavoured to rise, he expired in the arms of his attendants. His death happened on the twenty-fourth of June, in the seventy-eighth year of the Christian æra, after he had lived sixty-nine years, seven months, and seven days, and reigned ten years, six days excepted, from the time he was proclaimed emperor in the city of Alexandria.

*Yr. of Fl.
2428.
A. D. 78.
U. C. 828.*

*The death
of Vespasian.
His character.*

His death was universally lamented; and his memory gratefully preserved by such as were true friends to their

¹ Suet. in Tit. cap. 6. Dio, lib. lxxi. p. 752. Tacit. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 6.

country. In war, he was next to Julius Cæsar, and to Augustus in peace; and seemed to have been raised by Providence to preserve the empire from utter destruction. Greatness and majesty, says Pliny, wrought no alteration in him, but that of making his power of doing good answerable to his will. He was the second Roman emperor, if not the first, who died a natural death; and the first who was succeeded by his son. He is said to have been so confident, that the empire was by the laws of fate destined to him, and his posterity, that he affirmed in the senate, he should, in opposition to all plots and conspiracies, retain the sovereignty to his death, and be succeeded in it by his two sons. His obsequies were performed with extraordinary pomp by Titus (N).

Vespasian founded various colonies in different parts of the empire; one at Emmaus, about sixty furlongs from Jerusalem, to which place he gave the name of Nicopolis, or the City of Victory; one at Cæsarea, which was from him called Flaviana, with the addition of Prima, as being the first in dignity of all the cities in Palæstine. Deulte, or, as some call it, Deulte, in Thrace, Sinope in Pontus, and Flaviobrigia in Spain, now Bilbao, are by some writers reckoned among the colonies founded by Vespasian ^m. Neapolis in Samaria, called formerly Sichem, Samosata the capital of Comagene, Tripolis in Phœnicia, Chalcis and Philadelphia in Syria, Cyrene in Libya, Critia in Bithynia, and Eumeneæ in Phrygia, bore each the name of Flaviana; whence some writers conclude Roman colonies to have been settled in all these cities, either by Vespasian himself, or one of his children.

Vespasian was succeeded in the empire by his eldest son Titus, who was born the 30th of December, about the time ^{Titus declared emperor.}

^m Vide Spanh. lib. vii. & Baud. p. 291. 769. & Norris de Epoch. Syro-Macedon.

^a Vide Baud. p.

(N) The Romans were at this time so preposterously fond of mimics and farces, that they were exhibited even at the funerals of persons of quality, when the pantomimes used to personate the deceased, counterfeit their speech, and imitate their actions. At the obsequies of Vespasian, a celebrated pantomime, by name Favor, personating the deceased emperor, demanded aloud, what the whole expence of the ceremony amounted to; and being told, to one hundred thousand sesterces, "Give me the money, (said he, stretching out his hand, and counterfeiting the emperor's speech), and throw my carcass, if you please, into the Tiber (1)."

(1) Sueton. cap. 19.

His education, studies, &c. before his accession to the empire.

of the death of Caligula, that is, in the 40th year of the Christian æra; so that he was now thirty-nine years of age. He was brought up with Britannicus in the court of Nero, and is said to have tasted the poison which was given to the young prince at the emperor's table. We are told that an astrologer, being consulted by Narcissus, the celebrated freedman of Claudius, relating to the lot of Britannicus, answered, that, by the laws of fate, the empire was not destined to him but to Titus, who happened to stand by him. Titus, from his tender years, followed with much application the study of rhetoric and poetry, and made great progress in both. He served first in quality of tribune in Germany, and afterwards in Britain; and in both provinces gained no less reputation by his modest and engaging behaviour than by his courage. Upon his return from Britain he pleaded some causes of great importance with uncommon applause. While he was very young he married Arricidia Tertulla, whose father was only a Roman knight, but had been captain of the prætorian guards. Upon her death he espoused Martia Furnilla, descended of an illustrious family; but divorced her after he had one daughter by her, named Julia Sabina. After his quaestorship, which he discharged with great reputation, he was advanced to the command of a legion, and attended his father into Judæa in quality of his lieutenant. In that war he distinguished himself, as appears from Josephus, in a very eminent manner; reduced, while he served under his father, some strong places, and gained the reputation both of a brave and prudent leader. Being sent by Vespasian to congratulate Galba upon his accession to the empire, and to receive his directions concerning the prosecution of the war against the Jews, it was reported by the populace at Rome, that Galba had sent for him in order to adopt him. Ground for this report was administered, as Tacitus observes, by the condition of the emperor, ancient and childless, and the great character of Titus, who was judged equal to any degree of fortune, however elevated. But, having received at Corinth authentic advice of the murder of Galba, he returned to his father, to whom he reconciled Mucianus, governor of Syria; for, between Vespasian and him, as the one ruled over Judæa, and the other over Syria, great animosities reigned, occasioned by their governing two neighbouring provinces*.

* Tacit. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 77. Suet. in Tit. cap. 1, 2, 3, 5. Philostr. in Vit. Apoll. Ty. lib. vii. cap. 3. Joseph. Bell. Jud. lib. iv. cap. 29.

He was left by his father in Judæa to prosecute the war against the Jews. Upon their parting, Titus gave a signal instance of his good-nature and affection towards his brother Domitian: for the emperor being informed that Domitian had already abandoned himself to all manner of debauchery, and assumed more authority than was suitable to a son only, was highly incensed against him. Titus, therefore, upon the departure of his father for Italy, pleaded with great affection and earnestness in favour of his brother, beseeching the emperor to beware of being rashly incensed by intelligence from such as brought criminal representations. Vespasian was not so much reconciled to Domitian, as charmed with the tender affection of Titus. He desired him to rest perfectly easy, and to study how to aggrandize the commonwealth by war, and the exercise of arms; adding, that it should be his task to insure the public peace and that of his family*. Of the conduct and military achievements of Titus, during the war which he carried on against the Jews, the reader will find an account in our history of that nation.

Is left by his father to carry on the war against the Jews.

His kindness to his brother Domitian.

After the reduction of Jerusalem, instead of returning to Rome, he went to Alexandria, where he assisted at the consecration of the ox Apis, wearing a diadem; which circumstance, together with his deferring from time to time his journey into Italy, and his giving a private audience at Zeugma to the ambassadors of the Parthian king, occasioned a report, that he designed to revolt from his father, and make himself emperor of the East. This rumour obliged him to hasten his departure for Rome, where he was received with acclamations of joy, and honoured with one of the most magnificent triumphs the city had ever beheld. He was dignified by the senate with the title of Cæsar, and by his father taken, in some degree, for his colleague in the empire; since, with him, he exercised the censorship, the tribunitial power, seven consulships, and managed all the affairs of the empire, writing even letters, and drawing up edicts, in his father's name.

Returns to Rome and triumphs.

Tacitus tells us, that he was more strict and reserved in his own reign than in that of his father; and Suetonius charges him with pride, cruelty, and even avarice. When any one, says the latter writer, gave him, by his unguarded conduct, the least umbrage, he hired people to demand his doom in the theatre, and in the camp of the prætorian guards, and then condemned him without farther proof or trial. In administering justice he was easily biassed by pre-

* Tacit. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 52.

sents, sold several employments of great trust unknown to his father, and indulged himself in festivity and pleasures, spending great part of the night in riotous banquets, with the most dissolute of the Roman youth, with eunuchs, catamites, and prostitutes. His passion for Berenice, the daughter of Agrippa the Great, and sister of Agrippa II. king of Iturea, was highly censured by the Roman people, who considered him as a second Nero; so that scarce ever any man arrived at the empire with a more sullied reputation, or more abhorred by the populace.

*Governs
with great
moderation.*

Upon his accession to the empire all these accusations turned to his praise and reputation; for no prince ever governed with greater moderation and humanity. Soon after his father's death he dismissed the beautiful queen Berenice, who had followed him to Rome with her father Agrippa, the last king of Judæa; and obliged her not only to withdraw from the city, but from Italy, though he was passionately fond of her; and this step he took merely out of complaisance to the senate and people, who were displeased to see their emperor captivated with the charms of a foreign woman.

*His conduct
towards
his brother.*

Though his brother Domitian pretended to an equal share in the government, and raised great disturbances in the city, by arrogantly maintaining that his father had left him partner in the empire, but that the will had been falsified; yet he could not prevail upon himself either to punish or banish him: on the contrary, he treated him as his colleague in the empire, conjuring him often in private, with tears in his eyes, not to hate a brother who bore him a sincere and tender affection, and was willing to allow him a due share in the administration. Pliny observes, that Julius Bassus dreaded Titus, on account of his intimacy with Domitian; but that he received no injury at the hands of the former, whereas he was banished by the latter. The emperors, ever since the reign of Tiberius, had paid no regard to the ordinances of their predecessors, granting to cities, or particular persons, privileges, immunities, or exemptions, till such grants were confirmed by themselves, after the charters were first carefully examined. But Titus, without suffering any application to be made to him, confirmed them all by one general edict; and his example was followed by most of his successors. He could not prevail upon himself to dismiss any suitor dissatisfied, or without some hopes of success. Being admonished by some of his friends, that he had promised more than he

*Confirms
all the
grants of
his predecessors.*

† Suet. cap. 6, 7. Tacit. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 52.
* Idem in Dom. cap. 2, & 9.

† Suet. cap. 7,

could easily perform, he replied, that no man should depart dissatisfied from the presence of a prince. It is well known, that, being told one night he had bestowed no favour that day, he expressed his dissatisfaction and regret with that memorable saying, "My friends, I have lost a day."

He treated the people with extraordinary kindness and complaisance. Having designed to exhibit a shew of gladiators, he signified by proclamation, that it should be exhibited, not according to his pleasure, but that of the people; and he was so far from refusing what they desired, that he earnestly solicited them to declare what they liked best, complying with their taste, though disagreeing with his own. He allowed free access, even while he was bathing, and received every person with great affability and condescension, yet so as to maintain the dignity of his rank, and the majesty of an emperor. No man's property he ever coveted; he often refused the usual presents, and such contributions as were due to him: nevertheless, of all his predecessors, none was more generous than he, nor expended larger sums in private bounties, in shews, and in buildings. After he had dedicated the famous amphitheatre, and finished with incredible expedition certain baths close to it, he exhibited, at an immense charge, a shew of gladiators, a naval battle in the old naumachia, and brought into the arena five thousand wild beasts of all kinds.

His complaisance to the people.

When he entered upon the office of chief pontiff, he solemnly declared, he took upon him that dignity in order to preserve his hands undefiled, and pure from shedding blood: and from that time he never was accessory to any man's death, though he might have exerted severity with great justice; but, however provoked, he spared the criminals, declaring, that he had rather die himself than put another to death. He gave the following instance of his great clemency: two patricians having conspired against him, were discovered, convicted, and sentenced to death, by the senate. But the humane emperor freely forgave them, admonishing them only in private, that in vain they aspired to the empire, which was given by destiny, exhorting them to be satisfied with the rank in which by Providence they had been placed, and offering them any thing else which it was in his power to grant. At the same time he dispatched a messenger to the mother of one of the traitors, who was then at a great distance, and under deep concern about the fate of her son, to assure her, that he was alive, and out of danger. He invited them the same night to his table, and, having next day placed them by him at a shew of gladiators, when the weapons of the combatants were, according

His clemency.

*Abolishes
the law of
majesty.*

*His severity to-
wards in-
formers.*

*A dreadful
eruption of
Mount Vesu-
vius.*

to custom, presented to him, he desired they would examine them¹. The law of majesty he utterly abrogated, and would not suffer any person to be prosecuted for speaking disrespectfully of himself, or the emperors his predecessors; saying, "If they blacken my character undeservedly, they ought rather to be pitied than punished; if deservedly, it would be a cruel piece of injustice to punish them for speaking truth. As for my predecessors, if they are truly gods, they are in a condition to revenge, when they think fit, the injuries done them, and stand in no need of my assistance and power²." The informers were the only persons against whom he proceeded with unrelenting severity, causing them to be publicly scourged, to be exposed to open view, and to the insults of the populace in the forum, the amphitheatre, and the circus, and then to be either sold for slaves, or banished to desert islands³. He was a prince, according to Suetonius, in whom all virtues centred, without the alloy of one vice.

Towards the end of the year 79 of the Christian æra, and first of Titus's reign, Campania was alarmed with a most dreadful eruption of Mount Vesuvius, which laid waste the country to a great distance, and destroyed a great many cities with their inhabitants, among the rest Pompeii and Herculaneum. The former had suffered much by an earthquake in the year 63 of the Christian æra, but had been rebuilt, and embellished with several stately edifices, especially a theatre, in which the people were assembled, and intent upon the public shews, when the city was swallowed up by an earthquake, which attended the eruption of the flames from the mountain. The cities of Puteoli and Cumæ were greatly damaged, partly by the earthquake, partly by the burning ashes; which, if the ancients are to be credited, reached Africa, Egypt, and Syria, and at Rome turned day into night, to the great terror of the inhabitants. Pliny the elder, who was then at Misenum, where he commanded the fleet, having discovered this cloud on the first of November, and not knowing whence it issued, went immediately on board one of the galleys, and sailed towards Mount Vesuvius. He was soon met by great numbers of persons, who, in small boats, were flying from the dreadful conflagration; but nevertheless, prompted by his curiosity, he pursued his course, though stones, ashes, and earth began already to shower down upon his vessel. We are also told that, to his great surprise, he found a new cape formed by the earth, and huge stones thrown out by

¹ Suet. cap. 9.

² Dio, lib. lviii. p. 354.

³ Suet. cap. 10.

the mountain. However, he proceeded with great intrepidity; and, reaching Stabizæ, between Pompeii and Surrentum, though the inhabitants had all abandoned the place, passed the night there, the better to observe the mountain, which seemed all on a blaze. The same night a dreadful earthquake happened at Stabizæ, and such a huge quantity of stones fell, that Pliny resolved to put to sea, but was prevented by contrary winds. At length the fire approaching, he attempted to save himself by flight; but, though supported by two of his slaves, he soon fell, suffocated, as is supposed, by the thickness of the air, and the insupportable stench of sulphur. His body was found three days after, and interred by his nephew, Pliny the younger, who was then at Misenum, and narrowly escaped the same fate, as he himself relates in his Epistles*. This is the first eruption of Mount Vesuvius we find mentioned in history.

The death of Pliny the elder.

In the course of the same year Titus assumed the title of emperor with the usual solemnity, on account of the advantages which the brave Agricola had gained in Britain during his second campaign in that island. Next year Titus, now consul the eighth time, with his brother Domitian, the seventh, gave many remarkable instances of his humanity and generosity, in repairing, at his own expence, the losses which the unhappy inhabitants of Campania had suffered by the late eruption of Mount Vesuvius. He sent into Campania two consulars, with large sums, to be employed in rebuilding the cities which had been overturned; and applied to the relief of the poor sufferers the goods and estates of such as had perished on this occasion, and left no heirs; nay, he went in person into Campania, and, with his own hand, distributed immense sums among those who seemed most worthy of his compassion†. While he was in Campania a dreadful fire broke out in Rome, which lasted three days, and reduced to ashes a great many private and public buildings, the library of Augustus, with all the books lodged in it, great part of the Capitol, and the theatre of Pompey. Titus was no sooner informed of this calamity, than he hastened to the city, and publicly declared, that the whole loss should fall upon him; and that he would repair the damage suffered by the public. He punctually performed his promise; for though many cities and foreign princes, by whom he was no less beloved than by the Romans, offered to bear their share in the expence, he could not by any means be prevailed upon to accept their offers; but chose rather to sell even the ornaments and furniture of

Agricola's second campaign in Britain.

Titus repairs the damages done by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius,

and by a fire at Rome.

* Plin. lib. vi. epist. 16, 20.

† Suet. cap. 8.

his own palace and country-houses, in order to raise money to defray the immense charges he was at in rebuilding the temples, the public edifices, and the dwellings of private people. This conflagration was followed by the most dreadful plague that had ever raged in Rome. Dio Cassius ascribes its rise to the ashes of Mount Vesuvius, which had covered the country all round to a great distance ^a.

Yr. of Fl.
2430.
A. D. 80.
U. C. 830.

*His good
nature dur-
ing the
plague.*

Titus left no remedy unattempted to abate the malignity of the distemper; exerting, at the same time, all the care and regard of a prince, all the tenderness and compassion of a father; encouraging the distressed multitude with his edicts, and relieving them with large and daily bounties ^b. Towards the end of this year he finished the famous amphitheatre, which is elegantly described by Martial ^b, who likewise mentions the baths that were finished about the same time (R). The emperor Titus, in his eighth consulship, repaired some ancient aqueducts, and, at a vast expence, paved with large stones the road from Rome to Ariminum, crosses the Apennines, where is still to be seen, not far from the present city of Fossombrone, a huge rock cut through on this occasion ^c.

*New ho-
nours con-
ferred up-
on Titus.*

The next consuls were Sex. Annus Silvanus and T. Annius Verus Pollio. The latter is by some writers supposed to be the grandfather of the emperor M. Aurelius, who was, according to Capitolinus, raised by Vespasian to the rank of a patrician, discharged twice the office of consul, and governed Rome with general satisfaction. This year the senate, not out of flattery, but a sense of gratitude, conferred new honours upon Titus. What honours these were, we are not told; but the good emperor lived not to enjoy them, being suddenly snatched away, to the inexpressible grief of the Roman people. Suetonius tells us, that he exhibited certain shews (during which he shed many tears in the presence of the multitude), and retired, as soon

^a Dio, lib. lxxvi. p. 756. ^b Ibid. & Suet. cap. 8. ^c Mart. lib. de Spect. Epigr. 1. ^d Onuph. in Fast. p. 210. Goltz. p. 56.

(R) The amphitheatre, of which the stately remains are still to be seen, had been begun by Vespasian, and stood, as we learn from Dio Cassius, in the midst of the city, though its ruins lie in the outskirts of modern Rome. Titus, when he dedicated, according to custom, that noble and stately edifice, exhibited most magnificent shews, which lasted a hundred days, and raised the spirits of the people ready to sink under the calamities they had suffered (1).

(1) Dio, p. 757. Marc. Velfer. Monument. Auguf. Lapid. 35.

as they were over, into the country of the Sabines, greatly grieved, because the victim, while he was sacrificing, had broken loose; and a dreadful clap of thunder had been heard, though the day was bright, and not a cloud to be seen. The first night he lay out of Rome, he was seized with an ardent fever; but nevertheless pursued his journey in a litter, being desirous to end his days in the same house where his father died. Having with much difficulty reached Cutylæ, his paternal estate, he expired soon after his arrival, on the thirteenth of September, in the forty-first year of his age, after having reigned two years, two months, and twenty days. He far excelled, in the opinion of the ancients, all his predecessors, in every virtue becoming a prince; and was equalled by few of his successors. He knew no purpose of being more powerful than others, but to do good to all. He was a stranger to parade and ostentation, choosing to live with his people rather as a father with his children, than a prince with subjects; whence he was deservedly styled, "The love and delight of human kind." His death was no sooner known, than a general sorrow, an universal consternation appeared in Rome, which in a short time spread all over the provinces, to the most distant bounds of the empire. The senators, without being summoned according to custom, hastened to the palace; and, having caused the doors of the chapel, where they met, to be shut for a time, in order to indulge their grief, they opened them again, and, in the presence of the multitude, heaped more praises upon him after his death, than they had ever uttered while he lived amongst them; a plain proof of the sincerity of their esteem and affection. Domitian caused him to be ranked among the gods, and was the first who paid him divine honours; but at the same time studied, both in private and in public, to revile his memory, and lessen the esteem and veneration which all orders of men had for so worthy and deserving a prince^d. Titus left only one daughter, named Julia Sabina, of whom we shall have occasion to speak in the following reign.

Titus was succeeded by his brother Domitian, who, without the least opposition, was immediately acknowledged emperor, notwithstanding the bad opinion which many entertained of his character. He was born on the twenty-fourth of October of the year 51 of the Christian æra, his father being then consul elect, and appointed to discharge that office the month following. He passed his youth in

Is taken ill, and leaves Rome.

Yr. of Pl.
243¹.
A. D. 81.
U. C. 831.

His death.

His character.

Is universally lamented.

Domitian acknowledged emperor.

^d Suet. in Domit.

His education.

great poverty, and is said to have been a pathic to **Nerva**, who succeeded him, for hire, and likewise to one **Clodius Pollio**, formerly prætor, who kept a note, under Domitian's own hand, by which he bound himself, for a sum of money, to comply, when required, with his lewd and unnatural desires. He did not apply himself, from his tender years, to the study of history, poetry, eloquence, or any other liberal art or science: hence in all his speeches and harangues he availed himself of the eloquence of others. He took great delight in archery, in which he was so wonderfully expert, that he was frequently seen to shoot a great number of arrows between the fingers of one of his domestics, whom he placed at a great distance with his hand expanded, telling before, between which fingers the arrow would pass, and never missing his aim. He was naturally cruel, suspicious, and addicted to revenge; greedy of honours, but impatient of the least toil or labour; affected the reputation of a brave commander, but carefully avoided exposing himself to any danger. Being at Rome when his father assumed the title of emperor, Vitellius placed guards about him; but he might nevertheless have easily escaped, several messengers having, by various disguises and shifts, reached him from Antonius Primus, and shewed him from what place he might fly, and upon what security depend; nay, even those who guarded him, offered themselves for companions of his flight; but he, apprehending from thence, that they designed to betray him, could not by any means be prevailed upon to make his escape*. Upon the burning of the Capitol, whither he had retired with his uncle Sabinus, he concealed himself in the room of one of the ministers of the temple; and next morning was conveyed, by his freedman, beyond the Tiber, in the disguise of one of the priests of Isis.

Is saluted Cæsar.

When Primus had made himself master of the city, and all apprehensions of hostility had ceased, he discovered himself to his father's generals; and was, by the soldiers thronging about him, saluted Cæsar; which title was confirmed to him the day following by the senate. From that time, to the arrival of his father, he bore the chief authority in Rome; but gave no attention to the cares of government, abandoning himself to all manner of voluptuousness, and making use of his power only to indulge his vicious inclinations with more liberty. He took Domitia Longina, the daughter of the famous Domitius Corbulo, from her husband L. Ælius Lamia, married her, and had a son by

* Tacit. Hist. lib. iii. cap. 59.

her,

her, who was honoured with the title of Cæsar, but died an infant, and was, by Domitian, ranked among the gods^f.

In the beginning of his father's reign, being jealous of the glory which his brother had acquired in the Jewish war, he resolved to go into Gaul, and take upon him the command of the army which was employed against Civilis.

He resolves to head the army against Civilis.

Mucianus did all that lay in his power to divert him, as he was unexperienced in military affairs, from such a resolution: but Domitian continuing obstinately determined upon that expedition, Mucianus resolved to attend him, in order to check his ardour; lest, following the impetuosity of his age, and infligated by evil counsellors, he might disconcert all measures, whether for peace or war. After many procrastinations and delays, they both set out; but received, before they reached the Alps, advice of the defeat of the Treverians. Upon this intelligence, Mucianus declared his sentiments freely. He observed, that Domitian would proceed with an ill grace, now the war was near concluded, and rob another of the whole glory. He added, that, were the empire threatened with danger, it would be the duty of the emperor's son to venture his person in battle; but to contend with the Caninefates and Batavians, was beneath his dignity. "Let Domitian (continued he), retire to Lyons, and from thence display the power and fortune of the empire; neither engaging in small hazards, nor failing to meet such as are greater." Thus Mucianus prevailed upon him to retire to Lyons. From this city Domitian was believed to have tried, by secret emissaries, to corrupt the fidelity of Cerealis; and to have inquired, whether he would commit to him the army and empire, if he came in person. It remained uncertain whether he meditated a war against his father, or intended to arm himself against his brother; for Cerealis artfully eluded his suit, as that of one who, with a childish fondness, longed for things to which he was not equal.

He attempts to corrupt Cerealis.

Domitian, perceiving that Cerealis despised his youth, relinquished all functions of government; and, burying himself in solitude, affected a zeal for learning, especially for poetry; in order to conceal his ambition, and other passions, and to escape the jealousy of his brother^g. While he pretended to place his whole delight in study, and a fondness for solitude, the king of the Parthians having demanded succours against the Alani, he earnestly intreated his father for the command of those troops; and, when he found the emperor averse to assist the Parthians, he applied

Retires, and feigns a love for learning and poetry.

^f Suet. cap. iii. Spanh. p. 650.

^g Tacit. Hist. lib. iv. cap. 36.

*Has some
thoughts of
revolting.*

to the eastern princes, soliciting them with promises and presents to request supplies, and himself to lead them. Vespasian was too well acquainted with his views and temper, to trust him with the command of an army. Upon the death of his father, he deliberated a long time, whether he should openly revolt, and tempt the fidelity of the prætorian guards, by offering them a larger donative than his brother had promised them; but, his courage failing him, he bore no other title, during the reign of Titus, than that of Cæsar prince of the Roman youth; a title now peculiar to the presumptive heir of the empire^b. His brother no sooner expired, than he repaired to the camp of the prætorian guards, and was there, by the soldiery, after having promised them the usual donative, saluted emperor: at the same time he assumed, as appears from several ancient inscriptions, all the other titles annexed to the sovereignty, which other emperors had taken successively¹.

*He reviles
the memory
of his brother.*

*His conduct in the
beginning
of his
reign.*

Domitian, now invested with the sovereign power, which he had long and impatiently coveted, performed the obsequies of the deceased emperor, and pronounced his funeral oration, with an affected concern, lamenting the loss of a brother so dear to him, and by whom he was so tenderly beloved: but that his grief was only affected, he soon made appear, by publicly reviling the memory of that excellent prince, by censuring his conduct, and persecuting all those whom he had distinguished with particular marks of his favour; he openly declared in the senate, that both his father and brother were indebted to him for the empire; and that they had only restored what was his own gift: however, in the beginning of his reign, he studied to gain the affections of his people, by a conduct worthy of a great prince, disguising his vices, and affecting the opposite virtues: he shewed such an abhorrence to all manner of cruelty, that he once resolved, by an express edict, to forbid the sacrificing of oxen, or any living creature: he was so far from betraying any inclination to avarice, that he gave daily instances of a temper princely and munificent, presenting his officers and ministers with large sums, in order to raise them above the temptation of accumulating wealth by methods sordid and mean: he could not be prevailed upon to accept such inheritances as were left him by persons who had children; and because one Ruscus Scipio, by his will, obliged his heir to pay a certain sum to every new senator, he declared the will void, and would not suffer it to be executed to the prejudice of his own children. All debts

^b Suet. cap. 2. Onuph. in Fast. p. 210.

¹ Idem. *ibid.*

above

above five years standing, which were owing to the exchequer, he freely remitted; and, after the division of lands amongst the veterans, restored the remainder to the ancient proprietors, though he might, after the example of other emperors, have appropriated it to himself: he forbade, on pain of banishment, all the officers of the treasury to sue for debts that were not clear and undoubted^k; he confirmed at once all the grants made by his predecessors, increased the pay of the soldiers, and finished, at an immense charge, all the public buildings, which had been begun by Titus,

Plutarch affirms that he expended above twelve thousand talents in gilding the Capitol only; and that nevertheless *His magnificence in public buildings.* cash hall and gallery of his own palace far excelled that stately temple in magnificence^l. To the ancient edifices, which he either repaired or built, he added an incredible number of new structures; having a great passion for building, and seeming desirous, as Plutarch expresses it, to change every thing into stones and gold. He was assiduous and impartial in the administration of justice; punished, with the utmost severity, such judges as were convicted of having received bribes; and kept the magistrates of the city, as well as the governors of the provinces, in such awe, that they were never known to behave with so much rectitude as in his time. Though after his accession to the empire he neglected all kinds of literature, and was never known to have perused any book, except the Memoirs of Tiberius, yet he repaired the libraries which had been burnt in his brother's reign; *Repairs the public libraries.* procuring copies of such as had been consumed in the flames, and sent persons to Alexandria, to transcribe those that were lodged in that famous library. Authors observe, as a thing very remarkable in Domitian, that, in the beginning of his reign, he used to retire every day, for some time, into his room, where his whole employment was to catch flies, and pierce them with a sharp bodkin; which custom gave occasion to Vibius Priscus, when he was asked, whether any body was with the emperor, to answer pleasantly, "Not so much as a fly^m."

Domitian, in the first year of his reign, took upon him the consular dignity; and chose for his colleague Titus Flavius Sabinus, his cousin-german, the son of Flavius Sabinus, governor of Rome, who was murdered in the reign of Vitellius. The emperor resigned the fasces on the thirteenth of January; but to whom, we are no where told;

^k Suet. cap. 9.
lib. lxvii. p. 766.

^l Plut. Vit. Public.

^m Aur. Vict. Dio,

Enacts several wholesome laws.

Puts Flavius Sabinus to death.

Yr of Fl.
2433.
A. D. 83.
B. C. 833.

Domitian attacks the Cattans, and for his mock-victory is honoured with a triumph.

and assumed the title of censor ; which office he discharged with great reputation, restraining, by several edicts, the licentiousness which generally prevailed amongst all ranks of men. He enacted severe laws against the authors of such writings as reflected on persons of distinction ; degraded the senator Cæcilius Rufinus, for no other reason than because he took great delight in dancing. Such women as led scandalous lives, he deprived of the privilege of being carried in litters, and declared them incapable of enjoying legacies or inheritances : he struck a Roman knight out of the list of judges, for taking his wife again, after he had divorced her for adultery : one of his freedmen having erected a monument for his son, with the stones which were designed for the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus, he caused it to be demolished, and the bones and ashes of the deceased to be thrown into the sea : he would not suffer the comedians to act on the public stage ; but confined them to private houses and gardens : many persons of both sexes, convicted of adultery, he punished with death^a. These regulations, and acts of justice, were received with great satisfaction ; but the death of Flavius Sabinus, which happened in the end of this, or the beginning of the following year, occasioned a universal dread in the city, for the emperor, without any regard to his own blood, caused him to be assassinated, because the public crier had, by mistake, instead of consul, proclaimed him emperor in the assembly of the people^b. Sabinus had married Julia, the daughter of the emperor Titus ; which marriage proved the source of Domitian's jealousy.

Domitian, in the second year of his reign, undertook an expedition against the Cattans, whom Tacitus describes as the most warlike nation in Germany. The emperor attacked them without the least provocation, and while they were unprepared for war, laid waste part of their country, took a small number of peasants prisoners, and then, upon advice that the enemy were collecting their forces, returned to Rome with all the pomp and parade of a conqueror. The senate, for this pretended victory, decreed him a triumph ; in which were led before his chariot great numbers of slaves, by him bought, and attired like Germans. On occasion of this mock-victory he promised to increase the pay of the soldiers ; but not having a sufficient sum to discharge his promise, and at the same time supply his other extravagances, he soon after betook himself to

^a Suet. cap. 7, 8. Plin. Panegy. Zonar. p. 197. cap. 10.

^b Suet.

all manner of rapine and violence. From this time Domitian constantly wore in the senate, and at all public assemblies, the triumphal robe.

In the mean time Agricola, having entirely reduced Britain, acquainted Domitian, by letters, with the success that had attended his arms in that country. Few things of consequence had been transacted in Britain, since the administration of Suetonius Paulinus. Petronius Turpilianus, who succeeded him in that government, did not hazard any new enterprize; and his inactivity was imitated by his successor Trebellius Maximus, who being unskilled in war, and naturally indolent, thought of nothing but the preservation of the public tranquillity. The only interruption he met with, was a mutiny of the twentieth legion, encouraged by its leader Roscius Coelius, who despised the prætor's pacific disposition. Maximus was obliged to compound matters with the mutineers, who allowed him to maintain the shadow of authority till the latter end of Nero's reign, when the auxiliary cohorts and cavalry revolting under the auspices of Coelius, he quitted Britain, and fled for protection to Vitellius, who had assumed the purple in Germany. As soon as this new emperor was established at Rome, he gave the command of the forces in Britain to Victus Bolanus, who governed the province with great lenity; but his successor, Petilius Cerealis, performed a number of exploits, as we have seen above: when he was recalled, the government of Britain devolved to Julius Frontinus, who acquired equal glory in subduing the fierce Silures, rendered almost invincible by their courage and the nature of their situation. It was in the room of this brave general, so famous for his book on stratagems, that Agricola was sent to command in Britain, where he arrived about midsummer. Understanding that the Ordovices, a people of North Wales, had just surprised and cut off a body of Roman horse that guarded their frontiers, he forthwith assembled the forces that were nearest, and marched against the enemy, whom he defeated, and indeed almost exterminated. After this exploit, he swam his horse over to the isle of Mona, or Anglesey, the inhabitants of which were so intimidated by this bold measure, that they immediately submitted, and sued for peace.

Affairs of Britain.

Agricola conquers the isle of Anglesey.

Agricola spent the winter in rectifying the disorders that had crept into the administration of the province; in reforming the soldiery, and improving the discipline of the army. He prevented extortion, appointed magistrates of

*Subdues
the Otdini of
Northum-
berland.*

*Penetrates
into Scot-
land.*

approved integrity, and by his mild and equitable government maintained the province in peace and abundance; so that the Britons had cause to rejoice, when, upon the death of Vespasian, his son Titus confirmed Agricola in his command. In the beginning of summer he took the field again, directing his march northward, where he subdued the Otdini of Northumberland, who had not yet submitted to the Romans; and secured his conquests with a chain of forts, in which he left garrisons, with directions to sustain one another in case they should be attacked in the winter. The severe season of the year he employed in civilizing the natives, who, charmed by the elegance of his manners, began to be enamoured of the Roman arts and magnificence, which they now imitated with surprising emulation. They raised stately temples, porticos, and public edifices; they learned and spoke the Latin language; they put on the Roman toga, and looked upon that as a mark of politeness, which was, in effect, the badge of their slavery. In these improvements they were encouraged and assisted by Agricola, who, in his intercourse with their chiefs and princes, made them acquainted with the comforts and conveniences of life. He had already secured their esteem and confidence, by enlisting their vassals in the auxiliary cohorts, and giving the command of them to British officers. He now persuaded them to build houses more suitable to the dignity of their birth, than those contemptible cabins in which they resided: he even furnished them with the means to make these improvements, and gave their sons a Roman education at his own expence. In his third campaign, he penetrated into the country now called Scotland, where at first he met with no resistance, and built forts so judiciously situated, and so faithfully maintained, that not one of them was ever taken, abandoned, or betrayed. The succeeding year he employed in extending his conquests. He drove the enemy to the western extremities of the island, and fortified the isthmus between the rivers Forth and Clyde with a chain of castles, by which the natives were excluded from the Roman settlements, and as it were confined within the limits of another island. In his fifth campaign, he embarked on board of a fleet equipped for conquest and discovery, sailed along the western coast of Scotland, made descents in several places, and in repeated engagements defeated the tribes who ventured to oppose his progress. On his return from this expedition, he quartered his troops in the part of Britain which lies opposite to Ireland, with a view to invade that island, which he hoped to conquer with a very moderate force, in consequence of the information
he

he had received from an Irish chief, who having been expelled from his own country, fled for refuge to Agricola: but he was prevented from executing this project by the envy and jealousy of Domitian, who had by this time succeeded Titus on the imperial throne. Mean while, in the sixth campaign, he resolved to penetrate to the very northern extremity of the island, having received advice, that the nations on the other side of the Forth were in commotion. The Britons of that country, distinguished by the name of Caledonians, had assembled a vast multitude in arms, to dispute his passage: nevertheless he put his troops in motion, and ordered his fleet to keep pace with the march of his army along the shore. He had not proceeded far, when he learned from some prisoners, that the enemy intended to make an irruption into the Lowlands, with several distinct armies, in order to attack the Roman settlements. In consequence of this advice, he divided his forces into three distinct bodies, that he might not be surrounded by their numbers, or circumvented by their superior knowledge of the country. The Britons no sooner understood this disposition, than they joined their troops again with incredible dispatch, surprised in the night the ninth legion, which lay at a distance from the main body of the army, and breaking into the camp, made a considerable carnage. Agricola, apprised of this attack, immediately detached his cavalry to sustain the legion, and amuse the enemy until the infantry should arrive. When the day broke, the Britons perceived the succours advancing, and would have gladly retired; but, as they were now engaged in front and rear, they found themselves obliged to maintain the battle, which was fought for some time with equal obstinacy on both sides; till at last the arms and discipline of the Romans prevailing, the Caledonians fled for shelter to their mountains, woods, and morasses. They were not, however, so much discouraged by this defeat, but that they resolved to venture another battle. With this view they reinforced their army, and sent their wives and children into places of security; but nothing farther was attempted on either side during the remaining part of the season. In the succeeding spring, Agricola ordered his navy to alarm the coast, while he himself taking the field again, began his march to the Grampian Hills, a high ridge of mountains that divides Scotland nearly into two equal parts. There he found the enemy waiting to receive him, under the command of their prince Galgacus, who had taken every precaution in his power to render this their last stand successful. Tacitus gives us to understand, that in a pathetic speech to his

*Obtains a
victory
over the
Caledo-
nians.*

people he represented, that, situated as they were at the extremity of the island, they had no resource but their courage, and that victory alone could save them from eternal bondage. Agricola drew up his army in order of battle, so as that the confederates should bear the first shock of the enemy's attack, and the legions, which were posted in the rear, be ready to support them, in case they should be overpowered. This disposition being made, he harangued the troops, reminding them of the glory of the Roman arms, representing, that this day would, in all probability, terminate their labours; and that the enemy, who now offered them battle, were no other than the fugitives of those nations which they had already conquered. Galgacus had occupied the declivity of a hill, while his cavalry skirted the plain, with the chariots in the front of the line, his whole army amounting to above thirty thousand men. The Roman general, being greatly inferior in number, extended his first line to the right and left, that he might not be outflanked by such a multitude; and alighting from his horse, posted himself at the head of the legions. The battle began with showers of darts and javelins, which did but little execution on either side: but Agricola, sensible how little the small targets and long pointless swords of the Britons would avail in a close engagement against troops armed in the Roman manner, detached four cohorts of Batavians and Tungrians to charge them sword in hand. These rushing forwards into close fight, with their long bucklers, and short, pointed swords, employed them against the naked bodies of the Caledonians, with such effect, that great numbers fell, and the rest were thrown into confusion, which was increased by their chariots, rendered useless on this uneven ground. The first line of the Romans profiting by this disorder, advanced to the attack, and falling among them with great impetuosity, a terrible slaughter ensued. Nevertheless, the Britons, who were drawn up on the brow of the hill, made a motion to attack the Romans, by this time dispersed in pursuit of those they had already routed: but Agricola perceiving their design, ordered part of his cavalry to advance, and keep them in awe, and the rest of his troops in the mean time completed the victory. The wings now closing, flanked the enemy on each side, and the carnage and confusion were redoubled. They endeavoured to fly; but finding themselves inclosed, threw down their arms, and rushed upon the swords of the Romans. The ground was strewed with the bodies of the dead and dying, and overflowed with blood. Yet even in this extremity, the Britons exhibited repeated proofs of courage and recollection.

As

*Their total
defeat under Gal-
gacus.*

As they were repulsed into the neighbouring woods, they rallied in small bodies, and fell upon those who were too eager in the pursuit. They made several efforts of this nature, and killed a good number of their enemies; till at length Galgacus finding it impossible to restore the battle, retired with the remains of his army, leaving ten thousand killed or wounded on the field. Agricola did not think proper to pursue a scattered enemy through mountains, fens, and woods, to which he was a stranger; but the summer being far advanced, he marched back into Angus, inhabited by the Horesti, who immediately submitted, and delivered hostages. Here he distributed his army into winter quarters, after he had embarked a body of troops on board of the fleet, the commander of which had orders to surround the whole coast of Britain. He accordingly steered northwards, subdued the Orkneys, and having made a tour of the whole island, arrived safe in the port of Sandwich ^a.

The Roman fleet sails round the island of Britain.

The account of these successes which Agricola sent to Rome, was plain and modest, without ostentation or pomp. The emperor received it with joy in his countenance, but with anguish in his heart; being well apprised, that his late pretended triumph over the Germans was held in public derision; whereas now, a true and important victory, gained by the slaughter of so many thousands of the enemy, was every-where sounded by the voice of fame, and received with universal applause. He could not endure, that the name of a private man should be exalted above that of the prince: to the emperor alone, he thought, properly appertained the glory and renown of being a great general. Tortured with these anxious thoughts, and indulging his humour of being shut up in secret, a certain indication that he was meditating some bloody design, he at last judged it the best course, upon this occasion, to smother his resentment, till the fame of these conquests, and the affection of the army to Agricola, were in some degree abated.

Domitian is struck with envy at the news of Agricola's conquests.

He therefore procured him a decree of the senate, for the triumphal ornaments, and a statue crowned with laurel; heightening these honours with many expressions full of esteem and respect: but in the mean time he resolved to recall him; and that this step might not be ascribed to jealousy, or envy, he caused a report to be spread abroad, that Agricola should have the province of Syria, then vacant by the death of Atilius Rufus. Agricola leaving the province of Britain, settled in peace and tranquillity, to his successor,

Yet causes triumphal honours to be decreed to him.

He recalls him.

crossed the Channel in his return to Rome. To avoid all popular distinction, and concourse, he entered the city by night, and repaired, as he was directed, to the palace; where the emperor received him with a cold embrace, but spoke not a word: then he mixed undistinguished amongst the crowd of courtiers.

*Agricola
leads a re-
tired life.*

From this time he resigned himself entirely to inactivity and repose. In his dress he was modest; in his conversation affable and free, and never accompanied by more than one or at most two of his friends; insomuch that many, especially such as judge of great men from their retinue and parade, when they beheld and observed Agricola, could not conceive whence proceeded his extraordinary fame; and indeed few there were, who could account for the motives of his conduct. Notwithstanding his retired life, he was frequently accused in his absence before Domitian, and as often in his absence acquitted. What threatened his life was no crime of his, nor complaint of any person for injuries received, nor any thing else, except the glorious character of the man, and the perverse disposition of the emperor, hating all excellence and every virtue. With these causes concurred the worst sort of enemies, such as extolled him, in order to destroy him. Besides, such times afterwards ensued, as would not suffer the name of Agricola to remain unmentioned; so that he was in constant danger of being sacrificed to the jealousy of the emperor, but nevertheless lived nine years after his last return from Britain.

Cariomerus, king of the Cheruskans, a German nation, being expelled by the Cattans, because he had submitted, and delivered hostages to the Romans, had recourse to Domitian for assistance. But the emperor, unwilling to engage in a war with that fierce nation, contented himself with conveying to his friend and ally a sum of money, instead of troops, which, he said, he could not at that juncture well spare. About the same time one Ganda, a German virgin and prophetess, revered in Germany as a deity, arrived at Rome; and, being kindly received by Domitian, after some private conferences with him, returned to her own country.

In the year following Domitian was consul the eleventh time; and had for his colleague one Fulvius, whom Onuphrius takes to be T. Aurelius Fulvius, or Fulvus, the grandfather of Titus Antoninus. He was a native of Nismes, twice consul, and governor of Rome. This year Domitian took the title of emperor four times; but for what victories

• Tacit. Vit. Agric. cap. 38—42.

• Dio, lib. lxxvii. p. 760.

we do not find recorded. We read indeed in Dio Cassius, that the Suevians and Lygians, whom that writer places in *Mœsia*, solicited Domitian for succours, who sent them only an hundred horsemen; an instance of contempt which so provoked the Suevians, that joining the Iazygians, a people of Sarmatia, they advanced, with a design to pass the Danube, and lay waste the Roman territories. Dio Cassius does not acquaint us with the issue of this bold undertaking; but Tacitus, having told us in one place, that the Sarmatians and Suevians entered into an alliance against Rome¹, adds in another, that soon after the return of Agricola from Britain, the Romans lost several armies in *Mœsia*, in Dacia, in Germany, and in Pannonia, entirely through the bad conduct of their generals. From different medals it appears, that Domitian returned this year to Rome from some expedition, of which not the least mention is made by the historians: perhaps he marched in person against the Suevians and Iazygians; at least several medals were stamped this year, in memory of a signal victory, real, or pretended, gained over the Germans².

The Suevians invade the Roman territories.

The emperor, after his return to Rome, abandoning himself to all manner of cruelty, caused the nativity to be cast of all the illustrious persons in the city, and put such of them to death as the astrologers said were destined to the empire. Metius Pomposianus, against whom some ill-designing persons had, on the same account, endeavoured in vain to stir up the emperor Vespasian, was on this occasion banished Italy, and confined to the island of Corsica; where he was soon after, by Domitian's order, assassinated. Nerva, who succeeded him in the empire, would have suffered the same fate, had not an astrologer assured the emperor, that he had no reason to be afraid of Nerva, who could not live many days. He now encouraged informers, though in the beginning of his reign he had treated them with great severity, and solemnly declared, that he would never attend to their accusations.

Domitian puts many persons of distinction to death.

Authors observe, that in the course of this year multitudes of senators and knights were accused of treason; and either sentenced to death by the senate, or ordered by Domitian to dispatch themselves. Of these the most illustrious was *Ælius Lamia*, whom he caused to be publicly executed only for a jest; for the emperor, who, as we have observed above, had taken away his wife, commending one

¹ Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 2.
& Noris. ep. Consul. p. 175.

² Vide Birag. Numism. p. 134.

day his voice, Læmia answered, " Yet, alas! I must be silent." Civicus Cerealis was murdered during his proconsulship of Asia, on pretence that he designed to raise disturbances in the state, but in reality because he had accepted the government of Asia, which had fallen to him by lot. Hence Agricola, when the proconsulship of Asia or Africa came to him by the same determination, declined the employment, and presented a petition to the emperor, begging to be excused. Domitian not only granted his request, but suffered himself to be, on that account, presented with formal thanks. Neither to Agricola did he give the salary which was usually paid to proconsuls. Salvius Cocceianus was executed for celebrating the birth-day of the emperor Otho, who was his uncle by the father's side; Sallustius Lucullus, who had succeeded Agricola in the government of Britain, was condemned for suffering a new kind of lances to be called after his own name; Junius Rusticus died for publishing a writing in commendation of the celebrated Thrasea, and Helvidius Priscus; Maternus, a renowned philosopher, suffered death for having declaimed in public against tyranny and tyrants. All the professors of philosophy, and every liberal science, says Tacitus, were expelled, and driven into exile; and that nothing which was worthy and honest might any where be seen, not only against persons, but against books, commending virtue or patriotism, a new kind of cruelty was exerted; for in the forum, the works of men famous for their genius and parts were publicly burnt.

The deplorable condition of Rome.

Every thing gave the jealous tyrant fear and offence. Was a man nobly born, and popular; he withdrew the affections of the people, rivalled the prince, and threatened a civil war. Was he afraid of popularity, and lived retired; he gained fame by shunning it, was still obnoxious, and found it prudent to abandon his country. Was he virtuous, and his life and morals without blame; he affected to be another Brutus, and, by the purity of his manners, upbraided the vicious behaviour of the emperor. If a man seemed dull and inactive, he only put on the disguise of stupidity and sloth, till he should find room for some bloody purpose. If he had a different character, and was lively and active; then it was plain he did not so much as feign a desire of private life and recess, but avowed a bold republican spirit. If he was rich, he was too weakly for a subject; and great wealth in private hands was dangerous to

* Suet. cap. 20. Tacit. Vit. Agric. cap. 2.

princes:

injuries: if he was poor, he would be the more enterprising and desperate. No man could possess any advantage or quality that rendered him acceptable to his fellow-citizens, and a blessing to his country, to his friends, or to himself, but he was sure to rouse the jealousy and vengeance of the tyrant, and procure a shameful death.

The persons of the accusers were considered as sacred and inviolable; the more they were detested by the public, the more they were protected by the emperor; and, in proportion as they deserved death and ignominy, had countenance and preferment. Their vilest forgeries, convicted and acknowledged against the lives and fortunes of the greatest men, drew down no punishment upon them *. In the midst of his cruelties, Domitian abandoned himself to all manner of debauchery, and was on that account no less infamous than the most vicious of his predecessors. His avarice was equal to his lewdness and cruelty; not that he had any natural turn to that vice, says Suetonius; but having exhausted his treasury by the many buildings he raised, by the magnificent sports and shews which he exhibited, by increasing the pay of the soldiers, and by other wild and extravagant expences, he had recourse to all sorts of rapine and extortion, seizing the estates of the most wealthy citizens; the least action or word against the majesty of the prince, was used as a pretence for stripping them of whatever they possessed. He confiscated inheritances, appropriating to himself all the effects of persons whom he never knew, if he could find but one witness to depose, that he had ever heard the deceased say, that Cæsar was his heir. With these, and such contrivances, he reduced the most opulent individuals to beggary, not only in Rome and Italy, but in all the provinces of the Roman empire. His officers and procurators exacted the tributes and taxes with the greatest rigour and severity imaginable; but, above all, he oppressed the Jews in a most cruel manner, not excepting even such of them as had renounced their religion; and with the like rigidity he treated those, says Suetonius (meaning the Christians), who lived in Rome after the manner of the Jews, and seemed to profess the same superstition †.

The heavy tributes, and the rigour used by the officers in exacting them, occasioned great disorders, and frequent revolts, in the distant provinces. In Africa, the Nasamoniens, whom most geographers place in the province of Cyrenaica, no longer able to bear the grievous imposts with

Encourages informers.

His avarice and extortions.

The Nasamoniens revolt;

* Dio, lib. lxxvii. p. 799.

† Suet. cap. 12.

which

*but are
utterly cut
off.*

*Domitian
assumes the
title of
Lord, and
that of
God.*

Yr. of Fl.

2387.

A. D. 87.

U. C. 837.

*The insti-
tution of
the Capito-
line sports.*

which they were loaded, and the insults and extortions of the collectors, defeated Flaccus governor of Numidia, stormed his camp, and put great numbers of his men to the sword: but Flaccus was soon revenged on them; for being informed that, elated with their success, they had abandoned themselves to jollity and carousing, he rallied his men, and coming unexpectedly upon them, while they were intoxicated with the wine they had found in the Roman camp, cut them all off to a man. Domitian, elated with the victory gained by his lieutenant over the Nafamonians, boasted in the senate that he had cut off the whole nation; for to himself he ascribed ^a all the advantages gained by his officers, though he bore not the least share in them, and to others every miscarriage, even if occasioned by a strict observance of his orders. As he hated and suspected every man, of parts, especially such as had acquired military renown, the commanders of the armies to recommend themselves to his favour, carefully avoided distinguishing themselves by any signal exploits, choosing rather to bear the insults of the enemy than to expose themselves to the dangers arising from the jealousy of the prince^a. The same year he first assumed, according to Eusebius, the titles of Lord and God, not being ashamed, in dictating an order to one of his secretaries, to begin it thus: "Our Lord and our God orders and commands, &c." About the same time he enacted a law, obliging all to pay him divine worship; and henceforward no man dared to address him by any other name than that of Lord and of God^b; nay, some writers tell us, that by an express law, all other titles, either in speaking or writing to him, were to be suppressed.

In the following year Domitian entered upon his twelfth consulship, having Servius Cornelius Dolabella for his colleague. At this period were instituted the Capitoline sports, so much spoken of by the writers of those days, according to whom they were to be exhibited once in five, but, by our way of reckoning, once in four years; for they were celebrated as the Olympic games, at the end of four years complete, and in the beginning of the fifth. As they were exhibited in honour of Jupiter Capitolinus, the emperor presided at them in person, attended by the priest of Jupiter, and the college of the Flavian priests^c. To this year Eusebius fixes the war with the Dacians, the most bloody and dangerous the Romans sustained during the reign of Domitian. The Dacians were accounted by the Romans as the

^a Dio, in Excerpt. Val. p. 709.

^a Plin. lib. viii. Epist. 14.

^b Suet. cap. 13.

^c Aur. Vict. & Oros. lib. vii. cap. 10.

most warlike nation then known. They were not only men for the most part of great strength, but of equal courage, despising death, which they considered as the end of a transitory, and the beginning of a happy and eternal life^(S). At this time a prince, named Duras, ruled over the Dacians; but, after having for some time held the sovereignty, by an instance of moderation hardly to be matched in history, he voluntarily resigned it to one Decebalus, whom he judged better qualified than himself for the discharge of so great a trust; for Decebalus was a man of great prowess and experience in war, and equally skilled in affairs of state^o.

Some account of the Dacians.

The Dacians, dreading the effects of the emperor's avarice, renounced the alliance which they had made with his predecessors, crossed the Danube, drove away the troops stationed on the banks of that river; and, falling upon Appian, or Oppian Sabinus, governor of Mœsia, defeated and killed him, committing every where most dreadful devastations, and seizing all the forts and castles raised in their neighbourhood by the Romans. Alarmed by this revolt, Domitian, having with all expedition raised a formidable army, marched at the head of it into Illyricum. Upon his approach, Decebalus dispatched ambassadors, declaring, that he was ready to put an end to the war, and renew the former treaties. But Domitian, instead of returning any answer to the deputies, ordered the flower of his forces to advance against the Dacians, under the conduct of Cor-

The Romans defeated by the Dacians, and their general killed.

^d Strabo, lib. vii. p. 297. Suid. Phot. cap. 166. Excerpt. Vales. p. 709—761.

^o Dio in

(S) Dio Cassius observes, that these people were by some Greek writers called Getæ; but by the Romans, Daci, which was their proper appellation; for the Getæ dwelt beyond Mount Hæmus, near the mouth of the Danube, and the Euxine Sea; but the Dacians more to the west, and nearer Germany; that is, according to the opinion of most modern geographers, in the countries now known by the names of Moldavia, Walachia, and Transylvania. But the emperor Aurelian having afterwards placed them on this side the Danube (with respect to Rome), they gave their name to that part of Illyricum which they possessed; and this is the province which, in the fourth and fifth centuries, was known by the name of Dacia. As for the ancient Dacia, it was then held by the Goths, whom Jornandes, throughout his history, confounds with the Dacians (1).

(1) Vide Lloyd. Dict. Historic. p. 405. Baud. p. 237. Jornand. Got. cap. 12, 13, &c.

nelius

nelius Fuscus, captain of the prætorian guards. This officer was of an illustrious descent, and had in his early youth, from a passion for solitude and repose, divested himself of the senatorial dignity¹. Upon the death of Nero he declared for Galba, by whom he was created procurator of Illyricum. Afterwards he embraced the party of Vespasian against Vitellius, and to the flame of war added fresh fuel; for he delighted less in the rewards of perils than in the perils themselves. He was second in the command of the forces under the famous Antonius Primus, and honoured by the senate, after the death of Vitellius, with the ornaments of the prætorship. Domitian conferred upon him the command of the prætorian guards. But with all his intrepidity he was not, if Juvenal is to be credited, sufficiently qualified for the chief command of an army. Hence Decebalus, despising such a general, sent another embassy to Domitian, offering to conclude a peace with him, upon condition that each Roman should pay him yearly two oboli; and threatening, if they rejected his proposal, to pursue the war with vigour, and destroy their territories with fire and sword. The Romans were so provoked with the insolence of this proposal, that they demanded immediately to be led against the enemy. Accordingly Fuscus, having caused his army to pass the Danube on a bridge of boats, entered the Dacian territories, where, after several skirmishes, Decebalus and Fuscus agreed to risk the whole on the issue of a general engagement. Both armies fought with such bravery and resolution, that the victory continued long doubtful: in the end the Romans were utterly routed, and Fuscus himself slain. The Dacians took one eagle, a great quantity of arms, all the engines of war, and a vast number of captives, who were afterwards found in the enemy's castles, and released by the emperor Trajan. Had Agricola been employed as general against this nation, according to the vows and wishes of the people, in all probability the war would have been prosecuted with very different success; but the mean-souled emperor sacrificed even his own interest to his envy; and dreaded nothing so much as to see a man of Agricola's talents and reputation at the head of an army².

*They are
defeated a
second
time, and
Fuscus their
general
killed.*

The news of this defeat alarmed Domitian, who was already returned to Rome, where he made as dreadful a havoc of the senate and people as the Dacians had made of the soldiery. He strove at first to suppress the dismal tid-

¹ Tacit. Hist. lib. ii. cap. 86.

² Jornand, de Reb. Goth. cap. 13. Oros. lib. vii. cap. 8. Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 773.

ings; but finding they were by common fame divulged throughout the city, and even magnified, he left Rome a second time, pretending, that he would head the army in person. But arriving in Moesia, he remained in a city of that province, and sent forward his generals against the enemy. Many bloody battles were fought with various success, fortune being sometimes favourable to the Romans, sometimes to the Dacians^b. Julianus, one of the Roman commanders, gained a signal victory, by obliging his soldiers to write their names on their bucklers, that he might by that expedient the more effectually encourage or upbraid each particular man. On this occasion Vezinas, who among the Dacians, was next in authority to Decebalus, finding no other means to make his escape, concealed himself amongst the dead, and in the night retired undiscovered. Decebalus, apprehending the Romans might, after their victory, besiege his capital, cut down, during the night, a great number of trees in a neighbouring wood, covered the trunks with armour, and, by that contrivance, prevented the Romans, who mistook them for soldiers, from pursuing the advantages of their victory. Decebalus was at length reduced to great difficulties, and obliged to sue for peace; which Domitian would not grant him upon any terms whatsoever: but instead of pursuing the war with vigour, and forcing him to submit at discretion, he turned his arms against the Quadians and Marcomanians, because they had not sent him succours during the war with the Dacians.

The Dacians receive a great overthrow.

These two nations, though celebrated for their bravery and power, unwilling to involve their respective countries in an unnecessary war, sent deputies to the emperor, begging him to forbear hostilities, which they were not conscious to themselves of having provoked. Domitian, instead of regarding their entreaties, caused their ambassadors, in defiance of the right of nations, to be murdered; an outrage which so provoked those warlike people, that, assembling all their youth, they took the field, engaged Domitian, and put him to flight. Then the cowardly prince, no less dejected upon his defeat than elated with his victory, dispatched ambassadors to Decebalus, with offers of peace upon very advantageous terms; which the Dacian thought it advisable to accept, since his army had been greatly reduced by the many battles he had fought. However, he refused to go in person to Domitian; but sent his brother to treat with the emperor, whom Domitian received with particular marks of friendship and esteem, de-

Domitian defeated by the Marcomanians.

Concludes a dishonourable peace with the Dacians.

^b Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 2.

liveing to him a diadem for Decebalus, and thus acknowledging him for king. Besides the diadem, he presented him with large sums; sent to him, at his request, a great number of artificers and workmen of all professions; and engaged to pay him yearly a certain income, which, to the reign of Trajan, was punctually conveyed to him; but that prince would not submit to the payment of so shameful a tribute, saying, that he had never been overcome by Decebalus¹. Domitian, upon the conclusion of such an opprobrious peace, acquainted the senate by letters, that he had at length obliged the Dacians to submit to the Roman yoke. At the same time he dispatched the ambassadors of Decebalus to Rome, with a letter written by that prince, or, as was most commonly believed, forged by the emperor himself, wherein the Dacian owned himself conquered, and no longer able to withstand the Roman troops, led on by so brave and valiant a commander as Domitian.

*Is honoured
with a tri-
umph.*

Upon this occasion the senate decreed him a triumph, which he enjoyed at his return, and at the same time one over the Dacians, of whom he had, with an annual tribute, purchased a peace; also over the Quadians and Marcomanians, by whom he had been defeated, and driven out of the field²; for his triumphs, says Pliny³, were ever certain proofs of signal advantages gained by the enemy. However, the poets who flourished under him, extol these imaginary victories, and compare them to those gained by the Scipios and Cæsars. Domitian, before he left Dacia, erected a stately monument to the memory of Cornelius Fuscus⁴.

*He cele-
brates the
secular
games.*

In the following year Domitian was consul the thirteenth time with L. Saturninus; but nothing happened, during their administration, which authors have thought worth transmitting to posterity: but the next, when Domitian was consul the fourteenth time, with L. Minutius Rufus, is remarkable for displaying the secular games, so called, because they were to be solemnized once in an age. They had been celebrated but forty-one years before, by Claudius; but Domitian computed the time from their being exhibited by Augustus. They ended, as appears from several medals which have reached our age, some time after the ides of September, in the eighth year of Domitian's reign, while Tacitus the historian was prætor⁵. Domitian, pursuing the carnage he had begun before he left Rome to wage war

¹ Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 762. & lib. lxxviii. p. 771. Mart. lib. v. Epigr. 3.

² Dio, p. 761. Suet. cap. 6. Euseb. in Chron.

³ Plin. Paneg. p. 21.

⁴ Mart. lib. vi. Ep. 76.

⁵ Ta-

cit. Annal. lib. xi. cap. 12.

with

with the Dacians, filled the city with funerals, putting all those to death who, on account of their birth or virtue, gave him the least umbrage °.

This general slaughter was in all likelihood produced by the revolt of L. Antonius, governor of Upper Germany, where he had two legions under his command. Provoked by the tyrannical conduct of the emperor, and depending upon the fidelity of his soldiers, whose affections he had gained by his mild and condescending behaviour, he at once took upon him the imperial title, and was acknowledged by the forces he commanded, as also by most of the German nations, who promised him powerful succours, not so much from any esteem or kindness they had for him, but through hatred to Domitian. The news of this revolt no sooner reached Rome than Domitian, quitting the city, marched to suppress it, leading with him the prætorian bands, and the flower of the troops quartered in Italy, all the senators, and the greater part of the Roman knights, even such as had absented themselves from the city, and long led a retired life, lest they should be afterwards accused of having abandoned the emperor in time of danger ; a charge which might have cost them their lives. He had not proceeded far on his route, when he received certain account of the total overthrow of Antonius, whose army was entirely cut off, and himself slain, by L. Maximus, according to some writers, or, as others assert, by Appius Norbanus †. While the armies of Antonius and Maximus were engaged on the banks of the Rhine, the river suddenly swelled to such a height, that the Germans, who came to the assistance of Antonius, could not cross it ; so that his army was entirely destroyed. Antonius himself being killed in the battle, his head was cut off, and sent to Rome ‡. Maximus on this occasion displayed no less generosity after the victory than he had manifested courage in gaining it ; for, upon the death of Antonius, he seized and burned all his papers, that the emperor might not use them to the prejudice of any man.

Domitian, however, made diligent search after his accomplices, torturing in a most cruel manner persons of all ranks and conditions, upon the least suspicion of their having been privy to the conspiracy, or having lived in friendship and intimacy with Antonius. On this occasion great numbers of persons were executed or banished, and their estates seized. Of the many who were accused, two persons only escaped unpunished, a tribune of senatorial dignity, and a centurion, who saved their lives at the ex-

Yr. of Fl.
2439.
A. D. 89.
U. C. 839.

The revolt
of L. Anto-
nius,

who is de-
feated and
killed.

Great
numbers of
persons ex-
ecuted.

° Euseb. in Chron. p Dio, lib. lxxvii. p. 764.
cap. 6. Dio, in Excerpt. Val. p. 709.

† Suet.

*Counter-
feit Nero
in Asia.*

*Domitian
takes the
title of em-
peror three
times.*

*Acilius
Glabrio put
to death.*

*Domitian
exhibits
magnificent
shows.*

perce of their reputation, by proving, that they had been pathics, and consequently incapable of engaging in any hazardous enterprize, or having any interest in matters of this nature, either with the general, or the army^r. After this revolt, Domitian would not suffer two legions to be quartered in the same camp during the winter; but kept them all separate, and at a distance from each other, lest, depending upon their strength, they should form dangerous designs, and raise new disturbances^s. In the course of this year, another counterfeit Nero appeared in Asia; and having, with a great multitude of followers, struck terror into the neighbouring provinces, retired to the court of the Parthian king, who received him with great marks of distinction, supplied him with a chosen body of troops, and seemed inclined to quarrel, on his account, with the Romans. But in the end he was prevailed upon by Domitian to deliver him up to the governor of Syria^t.

In the following year, T. Aurelius Fulvius and L. Atratinus being consuls, Domitian took the title of emperor three times; but for what exploits, we are not acquainted. The next consuls were Domitian the fifteenth time, and M. Cocceius Nerva, who was afterwards raised to the empire; this was the second time; for he had been consul in the second year of Vespasian's reign. Nothing happened during this year, either at Rome, or in the provinces, which the few historians who have written of these times, and whose works have reached us, thought worth recording. The succeeding consuls were M. Ulpius Trajanus, who succeeded Nerva in the empire, and Acilius Glabrio. As Glabrio was a man of great strength and activity, the emperor obliged him to fight in the arena with a lion, whom he overcame and killed. The people with loud shouts applauded his victory; which roused the jealousy of the emperor to such a degree, that he immediately banished, and soon after caused him to be murdered in the place of his exile, on pretence that he had attempted to raise disturbances in the state^u. This year Domitian exhibited a great many shews, both in the amphitheatre and the circus, which are celebrated by the writers of those times as the most costly and magnificent that Rome had ever beheld. Near the Tiber he caused a vast lake to be dug, in which a sea-fight was represented; with such numbers of ships as amounted to complete fleets. In the combats of gladiators, not only men, but women, entered the lists. In the amphitheatre two great conflicts were exhibited, one of horse;

^r Suet. cap. 10. ^s Dio, p. 764. ^t Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 2.
^u Dio, p. 766. Suet. cap. 10.

the other of foot : with the former, which was quite new, the populace were so charmed, that, forgetting the emperor's cruelties, they bestowed upon him higher encomiums than they had ever given either to Vespasian or Titus. During the sea-fight, a violent shower fell ; but nevertheless the emperor continued till the engagement was ended, often changing his cloaths, and would not suffer any of the spectators to retire ; whence, as the rain lasted some hours, many were seized with distempers, and some even died * (1).

The next consuls were, Domitian the sixteenth time, and Q. Volusius Saturninus. This year the emperor observing a vast plenty of wine, and as great a scarcity of corn, concluded from thence, that the husbandmen neglected the tillage of the earth to attend the cultivation of their vines. To prevent therefore this inconvenience for

* Suet. cap. 4. Dio, lib. lxxvii. p. 762, 763.

(1) Dio Cassius describes an entertainment, to which the emperor invited the principal men among the senators and knights ; an entertainment, says that writer, which, more than any thing else, displayed his tyrannical temper, and how wantonly he abused his power. At the entrance of the palace, the guests were received with great ceremony, and conducted to a spacious hall hung round with black, and illuminated with a few melancholy lamps, which were only sufficient to discover the horror of the place, and the several coffins, upon which were written, in capitals, the names of the several senators and knights invited. Great was their fright and consternation at the sight of so dismal a scene ; for the emperor had often publicly declared, that he could not think himself safe so long as one senator was left alive, and that amongst the knights there were few whom he did consider as

his enemies. After they had long waited, expecting every moment a tragical end, the doors were at length all on a sudden burst open, when a great number of naked persons, having their bodies dyed black, entered the hall, with drawn swords in one hand, and flaming torches in the other. The guests, at this dreadful appearance, felt all the agonies of death ; but those whom they looked upon as their executioners, having for some time danced round them, at once set open the doors, and acquainted them, that the emperor gave the company leave to withdraw. Thus did Domitian insult these two illustrious orders, shewing, says Dio Cassius, how little he feared them, and at the same time with how much reason they might dread his resentment, since it was in his power to cut them all off, without exposing himself to the least danger (1).

(1) Dio, lib. lxxvii. p. 769.

*His edict
against
planting of
vines.*

the future, he published an edict, forbidding any more vines to be planted in Italy, and commanding half the vines in the provinces to be immediately rooted up. The cities of Asia sent a solemn embassy, intreating him to suspend the execution of the edict with respect to their lands, since their chief revenues accrued from wine, and the neighbouring provinces abounded with corn. At the head of this embassy was Scopelianus, professor of eloquence at Smyrna, who, insinuating himself with wonderful address into the emperor's favour, prevailed upon him, to repeal the edict, and allow all nations subject to Rome full liberty of planting and cultivating vines at their pleasure.

*The death
of Agri-
cola.*

For the following year Pompeius Collega and D. Priscus were consuls. Pliny names the former among the consulars, who were living in the reign of Trajan². This year was remarkable for the death of the celebrated Agricola. His end proved afflicting to his family, says Tacitus, sorrowful to his friends, and matter of grief even to foreigners. The common people, during his sickness, were not only frequent in their visits to his house; but in all public places, in all private companies, made him the subject of their conversation: nor, when his death was divulged, was there a soul found, who did not lament it as a public misfortune. What aggravated the general concern was a prevailing rumour, that he was dispatched by poison. That there was any proof of this, Tacitus, his son-in-law, will not take upon him to aver: however, he tells us, that, during the whole course of his illness, Domitian caused frequent visits to be made him, both by his favourite freedmen, and his most trusty physicians; whether from real concern for his health, or eagerness to learn the probability that his death approached, our historian will not determine. It is certain that, on the day in which he expired, accounts were by messengers, purposely placed, every instant transmitted to the emperor, informing him how fast his end was approaching; and no one believed he would have been thus eager, had he been to feel any sorrow from hearing such tidings. However, upon the news of his death, he affected to shew in his countenance much grief and concern; for, being now secure against the object of his hatred, he could more easily disguise his present joy, than lately conceal his fear. It is incredible how great was the satisfaction which he expressed when, upon reading the last will of Agricola, he found himself left joint-heir with his excellent wife, and tender daughter. This disposition he ascribed to the uninfluenced

Yr. of Fl.
2443.
A. D. 93.
U. C. 843.

*Domitian
suspected of
causing him
to be poison-
ed.*

¹ Philostr. Vit. Apol. Ty. cap. 17.

² Plin. lib. ii. Epist. 11.

judgment and choice of the deceased; so blinded he was by continual flattery, as not to know, that to no prince but a tyrant, did ever any good father bequeath his fortune*.

Thus died Agricola, in the fifty-sixth year of his age; and, without entering into the enthusiastic encomiums of his son-in-law Tacitus, we may safely aver, that whether considered as a military commander, a civil magistrate, or a private citizen, he was an honour to human nature, and much too good for the age in which he lived.

The same year *Bebius Massa*, an infamous accuser, was himself accused of extortion by the Bithynians, whom he had plundered and oppressed in a most tyrannical manner, while he governed that province. The senate appointed *Pliny the younger*, and *Herennius Senecio*, originally a Bithynian, and formerly quæstor in the same province, to plead the cause of the Bithynians. This office they performed so effectually, that *Bebius* was condemned by the senate, and the consuls were ordered to seize his estate and effects. But as they delayed from day to day the execution of the judgment, *Senecio*, fearing the delinquent might in the mean time privately convey away part of his effects, resolved to apply for an immediate execution of the sentence, and urged *Pliny* to act therein in concert with him. *Pliny* at first declined engaging in an affair which he thought foreign to the profession of a pleader; but *Senecio* continuing obstinate in his resolution, he at length consented to solicit the consuls jointly with him, to seize the effects of *Bebius* without delay, that reparation might be made of the losses sustained by the Bithynians. Accordingly they went together to the consuls, where they found *Bebius*, who, upon hearing their petition, was so enraged against *Senecio*, that he summoned him before the emperor, as guilty of treason. The very name of treason struck the whole assembly with terror. But *Pliny*, without betraying the least fear, addressing *Bebius*, told him, he was sorry he did not charge him with the same crime, since, by his not accusing him, as well as *Senecio*, men might believe, that he had not acted against him with equal zeal; and that he should be grieved, if he knew, that any one entertained of him so bad an opinion. This firmness and intrepidity in *Pliny* was highly applauded; and *Nerva*, who was at that time in exile at *Tarentum*, congratulated him by letters upon his steady conduct. *Pliny* himself wrote to *Tacitus*, acquainting him with what had passed, to insert in his history, which he esteemed as a work that would never die; but the letter of

Bebius Massa, a noted accuser, arraigned.

The constancy and firmness of Pliny.

*Domitian's
expedition
against the
Sarmatians.*

Pliny has outlived that part of Tacitus's history^b. This year Domitian undertook an expedition against the Sarmatians, who had cut in pieces a whole legion, with the officer who commanded them^c: but, as to the issue of this war, we are quite in the dark: all we know is, that, on this occasion, he quarreled likewise with the Marcomanians; and, on his return, assumed the title of emperor for the twenty-second and last time. He returned to Rome in the month of January, and, instead of triumphing, contented himself with presenting a crown of laurel to Jupiter Capitolinus. Statius and Martial make frequent mention of this war, extolling, with their usual flattery, the supposed exploits, and pretended victories, of their hero.

*The calamity
of the
times.*

The following year, L. Nonnius Asprenas and Sextilius Lateranus being consuls, Domitian grew quite outrageous in cruelty; seemingly bent upon putting in execution the design, which he had long since formed, of utterly extirpating the senate, and destroying all who were any way considerable either for their birth or virtue^d. Tacitus thus describes the miseries of these calamitous times: "The islands were peopled with exiles; the rocks contaminated with murder and blood. But more hideous still were the ravages of cruelty at Rome. It was treasonable to be noble; capital to be rich; criminal to have borne honours, criminal to have declined them; and the reward of worth and virtue was quick and inevitable destruction. Nor were the iniquities of the informers more shocking than their great and distinguishing rewards; for upon some were bestowed, as the spoils of the state, the pontifical dignities, and those of the consulship; others were sent with the character of procurators into the provinces; some were made prime ministers and confidants at home; and in every station exerting all their terrors, and pursuing their hatred, they controlled and confounded all things. Slaves were suborned against their masters, freedmen against their patrons; and such as had no enemies were betrayed and undone by their friends^e." He thought it was happy for Agricola that he lived not to see "the court of the senate besieged, nor the senate inclosed with armed men, nor the butchery of so many persons of consular dignity, nor the flight and exile of so many women of the prime nobility, all effected in one continued havock. Even Nero (says he) withheld his eyes from scenes of cruelty: he indeed ordered murders to be perpetrated, but saw them not. The

^b Plin. lib. vii. epist. 33, & lib. iii. epist. 4.

^c Suet. cap. 6.

^d Tacit. Vit. Agric. cap. 44.

^e Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 2.

principal part of our miseries under Domitian was to be obliged to see him, and be seen by him, at a time when all our sighs and sorrows were watched and marked down for condemnation; when that cruel countenance of his, always covered with a settled red, whence he hardened himself against shame and blushing, served him to observe all the pale horrors at once possessing so many illustrious men ^f."

The persons whom he mentions in particular to have been this year put to death by Domitian, are Helvidius, Rusticus, and Senecio. Helvidius was the son of the celebrated Helvidius Priscus. He had been raised to the consulship, and was, on account of his extraordinary virtue, abilities, and accomplishments, in great credit with persons of all ranks, though he endeavoured, through fear of giving the emperor umbrage, to shun the applauses of the multitude, and conceal his talents in solitude and retirement. However, he was accused of treason; and it was pretended, that in a poem composed by him, he had, under the borrowed names of Paris and Cœnone, reflected on the emperor for divorcing his wife Domitia. When the accused appeared to plead his cause before the senate, one of the judges, named Publicius Certus, formerly prætor, seized him, with the assistance of some other senators, and, without allowing him to speak in his own defence, dragged him to prison, where he was soon after executed by the emperor's order ^g. As for Certus, he was named for the consulship, which he discharged four years after, in the second year of Nerva's reign, when Pliny arraigned him as a criminal before the senate, in order to clear his friend Helvidius, and make his innocence appear, at least after his death, since no one had been allowed to plead in his favour while living. The senate put a stop to all prosecutions of this nature, but yet degraded Certus, and deprived him of the consular dignity; whence he died a few days after in great agonies and terror, imagining, as he himself owned, that Pliny pursued him with a drawn sword. Pliny published the speech which he pronounced against him in the senate, but it has been long since lost. Herennius Senecio was, as we have related above, accused of treason by Bibulus Massa, whom he had charged with extortion at the suit of the Bithynians. The crime alleged against him was, that he had written the life of Helvidius Priscus, at the request of Fannia his widow, and made use of the memoirs with which she had furnished him. Though Senecio had,

Helvidius, Senecio, and Rusticus put to death.

^f Tacit. Vit. Agric. cap. 44. epist. 13.

^g Suet. cap. 10. Plin. lib. ix.

with all possible care, avoided such expressions as might seem in the least to reflect on the emperor, yet, because he could not help commending a man whom the prince had condemned, Domitian caused him to be sentenced to death, and executed without delay.

*Fannia,
the wife
of Senecio,
and her
mother
Arria, ban-
ished.*

Fannia acknowledged that she had persuaded Senecio to write the life of her husband, and supplied him with materials. For this crime she was, by a decree of the senate, confined to a desert island, whither she carried with her, as her only comfort, the history of her husband's actions, which had been the cause of her banishment, though it was declared capital to read or keep it. Arria, her mother, the widow of the famous Pætus Thrasea, was likewise banished; but they were both recalled in the beginning of the reign of Nerva^b. Domitian did not content himself with condemning Senecio for celebrating the praises of Helvidius Priscus^c, and Arulenus Rusticus, for applauding Pætus Thrasea; but ordered the magistrates to commit their books to the flames, imagining that, in the same fire, he should stifle the voice of the Roman people, with the liberty of the senate, and all the ideas and memory of mankind. Lucius Junius Arulenus Rusticus, (professed the philosophy of the Stoics, was tribune of the people when Pætus Thrasea was condemned by the senate in the reign of Nero, and, as such, would have interposed against it, had not Thrasea himself restrained him^d. He was prætor in the short reign of Vitellius, by whom he was sent to Petilius Cerealis, one of Vespasian's commanders, to mediate an accommodation: on which occasion he was wounded by the soldiery, who sternly rejected all terms of peace; and, notwithstanding the sacred character of an ambassador, would have been massacred, had it not been for the protection of a guard appointed by Cerealis. The crime laid to his charge by Domitian was his having, in his writings, commended Thrasea, and likewise Helvidius Priscus, as men of honour and integrity. He was accused by Marcus Regulus, who even published a book filled with most bitter invectives against him.

*Several il-
lustrous
persons
banished.*

Junius Mauricus, the brother of Rusticus, who is highly commended by Pliny^e, was banished; as was likewise Pomponia Gratilla, the wife of Rusticus; but they were both recalled by the emperor Nerva. At the same time was executed, by the emperor's orders, Hermogenes of Tarsus, being accused of speaking disrespectfully of the emperor,

^b Plin. lib. vii. epist. 19, & lib. ix. epist. 13. Dio, lib. lxxvii. p. 765.
Suet. cap. 10. ^c Tacit. Vit. Agr. cap. 2. ^d Tacit. Annal. lib.
xvi. cap. 26. ^e Plin, lib. i. epist. 14.

under borrowed names, in a history which he composed : all those who were concerned in transcribing or selling it were condemned to be crucified^m. The same year, and chiefly out of hatred to Rusticus, who professed the philosophy of the Stoics, all philosophers were, by a decree of the senate, driven out of Rome, and every science expelled Italyⁿ. Epictetus, the famous Stoic, was, in virtue of this decree, obliged to abandon the city. Lucius Telestinus, who had been consul in the reign of Nero, chose rather to retire from his native country, as a philosopher, than to maintain his dignity by renouncing that profession^o. Pliny bestows great encomiums upon the philosopher Artemidorus, who, on this occasion, left Rome. He had contracted great debts, but for laudable purposes, says Pliny, who supplied him with money to discharge them, when his other friends, though possessed of great wealth, abandoned him in his distress. The philosopher would afterwards have reimbursed Pliny ; but he generously presented him with the sum which was owing to him^p. Pliny frequently visited him in the place of his retirement ; by which means he exposed himself to no small danger, his actions and conduct being the more narrowly observed, as he was at that time prætor.

All philosophers driven out of Rome.

He was himself well apprised, that Domitian suspected him, as he had lived in great intimacy with Senecio, Helvidius, and Rusticus. Had not Domitian been seasonably cut off, Pliny would have undergone the same fate which most of his friends had suffered : for, after the emperor's death, a memorial was found among his papers, presented against Pliny by the celebrated informer Metius Carus^q. Many philosophers, dreading the resentment of the emperor, renounced their profession, and increased the herd of informers. Some, abandoning Italy, fled to the most western coasts of Gaul ; and others to the deserts of Lybia and Scythia. Dio Chrysostomus, a celebrated sophist, took shelter in the country of the Getæ, where he earned a livelihood by tilling the ground, and carrying water, having always with him, to alleviate his distress, a treatise of Plato, and an oration of Demosthenes^r. In the height of this persecution, Apollonius Tyaneus came to Rome, if Philostratus is to be credited ; and was received with great marks of esteem and veneration by Casperius Ælianus, commander of the prætorian guards.

Pliny suspected by Domitian.

Apollonius Tyaneus comes to Rome.

^m Suet. cap. 10. ⁿ Tacit. Vit. Agric. cap. 2. ^o Philostr. Vit. Apol. Ty. lib. vii. cap. 5. ^p Plin. lib. iii. epist. 12. ^q Ibid. lib. vii. epist. 27. ^r Philostr. Vit. Apol. Ty. lib. vii. cap. 2.

*Encourages
Nerva,
and others,
to conspire
against the
emperor.*

He had not been long in the city, before he contracted a strict friendship with Nerva, Rufus, and Salvidienus Orfitus, whom he solicited to conspire against Domitian, and to deliver the world from so bloody a tyrant. The author of his life tells us, that the plot was actually formed ; but that the conspirators delaying the execution of it, the emperor, in the mean time, suspecting their design, accused them of treason before the senate: the charge was not proved ; but nevertheless Rufus and Orfitus were confined to the islands, and Nerva to the city of Tarentum. Orfitus was soon after put to death ^a in the place of his exile. We find no farther mention made of Rufus by the writers of those times. If Nerva was banished, as Philostratus writes, he returned home the same or the following year ; for he was at Rome, as is plain from Dio Cassius ^b, when Domitian was murdered : nay, that writer takes no notice of the banishment of Nerva ; an omission which makes us suspect the truth of what Philostratus writes, who is often guilty of very considerable mistakes (U).

*The conspiracy of
Juvenius
Celsus.*

In the following year Domitian entered upon his seventeenth and last consulship, taking for his colleague Flavius Clemens, of whom we shall hereafter speak. At this period discovery was made of a dangerous conspiracy against the emperor ; at the head of which was Juvenius Celsus, whom some writers suppose to be the celebrated civilian Publius Jubenius Celsus, who was prætor in the reign of Trajan, and consul in that of Adrian, and is highly commended by Pliny ^c. Celsus, finding himself betrayed, obtained a private audience of the emperor ; in which, throwing himself at his feet, and accosting him as a deity with the titles of Lord and God, he protested, that, as to himself, he was quite innocent of the crime laid to his charge ; but would, provided he was allowed a short respite, discover all those who were concerned in the plot, and produce undeniable proofs of their guilt. In consequence of this offer, the emperor dismissed him untouched ; but Celsus deferring, under various pretences, from time to time, the promised

^a Suet. cap. 19.
epist. 5.

^b Dio, lib. lxxvii. p. 767.

^c Plin. lib. vi.

(U) Sulpitia, a Roman lady of great distinction, wrote a poem upon the expulsion of the philosophers ; wherein she inveighs with great bitterness against Domitian, and even

threatens him with death. She is highly commended by Martial for the purity of her manners, and the elegance of her composition (1).

(1) Mart. lib. x. epig. 35.

discovery,

discovery, escaped, by the death of Domitian, which happened the following year, the danger that threatened him *.

This year, the fourteenth of Domitian's reign, and 95th of the Christian æra, is remarkable for the cruel persecution raised against the Christians, of whom infinite numbers were put to death both at Rome and in the provinces, the emperor having dispatched letters and edicts into the most remote parts of the empire, commanding all those, who professed that religion, to be treated as declared enemies to the state * (W).

Yr. of Fl.
2445.
A. D. 95.
U. C. 845.

*The second
general
persecution.*

Among the many illustrious persons who suffered in so good a cause, were some of the emperor's own relations; namely, Flavius Clemens, his cousin-german, and colleague in the consulship, and the two Flavix Domitillæ, the one the wife, the other the niece, of Flavius Clemens. He was the son of Flavius Sabinus, the brother of Vespasian. His eldest son, named likewise Fl. Sabinus, was consul with Domitian in the first year of his reign, and soon after, by the emperor's order, put to death. Fl. Clemens married, in compliance with the emperor's desire, Fl. Domitilla, who was nearly related to Domitian †. By her Clemens had two sons, to whom Domitian, as he had no issue of his own, resolved to leave the empire; and therefore changed their names, calling one of them Vespasian, and the other Domitian. Quintilian was charged with the care of instructing and educating the two grandsons of the emperor's sister; a convincing proof that Flavia Domitilla, the wife of Clemens, was daughter to Domitilla, the emperor's sister; for these two youths were, without all doubt, the sons of Clemens by Flavia Domitilla. Clemens was this year consul; but had scarce resigned the fasces, when he was, upon a slight and groundless suspicion, cut off by the emperor's order. Dio Cassius relates, that he was accused of impiety or atheism; a crime, says that writer, for which many

*The death
of Flavius
Clemens.*

*Some ac-
count of
that illus-
trious per-
son.*

* Dio. lib. lxxvii. p. 765. † Oros. lib. vii. cap. 10. Tertull.
Apol. cap. 5. Lactan. Perf. cap. 3. Euseb. Chron. cap. 17. † Phi-
lostr. Vit. Apol. Ty. lib. viii. cap. 10.

(W) This persecution is noticed by Suetonius, who tells us, that Domitian obliged those who lived at Rome after the manner of the Jews, to pay the same taxes as if they were really Jews, and treated them with no less rigour and severity

(1) That Suetonius meant the Christians is evident; for all the Pagan historians, whether Greek or Latin, constantly speak of them as resembling the Jews in their manners, though not originally of that nation:

(1) Suet. cap. 12.

others

others were at that time condemned, who had adopted the manners of the Jews^a. Thus the Christians are constantly described by the Pagan writers, as is evident from Origen, and other Christian writers of the primitive times^b. The crime of impiety or atheism, was one of the charges commonly brought against the Christians, for refusing to pay any worship to the pretended deities of the Gentiles^c. Suetonius, speaking of Flavius Clemens, says, he was no way to be feared, being slothful and inactive; which was another charge, as Tertullian observes^d, brought against the Christians, on account of the retired life they led, and their despising the dignities which were so ambitiously coveted by others. It is, therefore, in our opinion, pretty plain, that the only crime alleged against Flavius Clemens was his professing the Christian religion.

Flavia Domitilla banished.

Flavia Domitilla, wife of Flavius Clemens, was likewise arraigned of impiety; and besides, refused to comply with the orders of the emperor, commanding her to marry another person a few days after the death of her husband^e. She was therefore banished to the island of Pandataria, in the bay of Puteoli, now known by the name of Santa Maria. As to Clemens's two sons, to whom Domitian designed to bequeath the empire, we find no farther mention made of them by the ancient historians; but we suppose, that if they were not destroyed by Domitian, the excellent princes Nerva and Trajan, who were enemies to all bloodshed and slaughter, suffered them to live unmolested.

Many Christians put to death or banished.

During this persecution St. John was confined to the island of Patmos, in the Archipelago, where he wrote the Apocalypse; and a great many champions of the Christian faith, mentioned by the ecclesiastical writers, suffered, in the same cause, death or banishment. This year Domitian caused Epaphrodius, formerly freedman and secretary to Nero, to be executed, for having assisted that prince in dispatching himself. By this instance of severity he hoped to deter his own freedmen from any attempts upon his life; and this, as Dio Cassius observes, was the only motive which prompted him to exert such rigour against a person whom he had admitted to his confidence, and honoured with the same employment which he had enjoyed under Nero^f.

The next consuls were Caius Fabius Valens and Caius Antistius Vetus, of whom the former was ninety years old when he entered upon his consulship, and seems to have

^a Dio, lib. lxxvii. p. 760.

Just. Apol. i. p. 56.

Apol. Ty. lib. viii. cap. 10.

Suet. cap. 14.

^b Orig. in Cels. lib. i. p. 5.

^c Tert. Apol. cap. 42.

^d Philost. Vit.

^e Dio, p. 766. Plin. Panegy.

*The death
of Domi-
tian fore-
told by
several
prodigies.*

died before it expired ^f. Many prodigies are said to have happened this year at Rome and in the provinces. The city was for eight months almost daily alarmed with dreadful claps of thunder and flashes of lightning: the Capitol, the temple of the Flavian family, and the emperor's own chamber, were damaged by thunder; the inscription upon one of the emperor's triumphal statues was beaten off, and, by the violence of the storm, carried into a neighbouring monument; the tree, which had been thrown down in Vespasian's time, and rose up again, fell down the second time; the oracle at Præneste, which had always returned favourable answers, and promised him good fortune and success at the beginning of each year, presaged nothing now but calamities and slaughter; Domitian himself dreamed, that Minerva, to whom, as his tutelary deity, he paid particular worship, and whose feast he annually celebrated on the Alban Mount, had withdrawn herself from the chapel which he had consecrated to her; telling him, that Jupiter had disarmed her, and that she could protect him no longer. But nothing terrified him so much as the answer of the astrologer Asclepiades, and the circumstances attending his prediction. This man being accused of having foretold the death of the emperor, and not denying the charge, Domitian asked him, whether he knew what would be his own doom. The astrologer answered, that, in a short time, he should be devoured by dogs. The emperor, to convince the world of the falshood of his art, ordered him to be immediately put to death, and his body to be burnt. The first part of the sentence was put in execution; but before the body was half consumed by the flames, it was blown down, together with the funeral pile, by a violent storm, and devoured, pursuant to the prediction, by the dogs ^g. Another astrologer, named Larginus Proculus, foretold publicly in Germany, that the eighteenth of September would prove the last day of Domitian's life. He was immediately apprehended by the governor of the province, and sent to the emperor, in whose presence he maintained the truth of his prediction, and was, on that account, condemned to be executed on the nineteenth of the aforesaid month; but Domitian being murdered the day before, as Proculus had foretold, he was not only dismissed unhurt, but presented by Nerva with a large sum, and ever after held in great esteem ^h.

^f Dio, p. 756. Onuph. p. 313. Idat. in Fast. &c.
^h Dio, p. 767. Suet. cap. 16.

^g Suet. cap. 5.

Domitian,

*He lives
in conti-
nual ag-
nies and
apprehen-
sions.*

Domitian, terrified with these predictions and prodigies, and alarmed by his own guilty conscience, lived in continual disquiet: there was no accident so trivial, no person so contemptible, as not to terrify him, and put him upon sanguinary precautions. Of the eminent persons, either of the senatorial or equestrian order, he was under perpetual apprehensions, and making daily victims: their wealth and race, their poverty, names, and quality, alarmed him: he suspected friends and enemies: those who advised him in council, those who diverted him at his leisure hours, his most intimate friends and confidants, were all martyrs to his jealousy and fury: he dreaded all men, and every thing: several of his freedmen were put to death. He deposed the commander of the prætorian guards, and discharged great numbers of officers. But the more he made others suffer, the faster he multiplied his own torments. At length he would not permit any criminal, however loaded with irons, to plead before him, till he had first secured the chains in his own handsⁱ. A young child, with whom he used to divert himself, having one day, while the emperor was asleep, taken a paper from under his head to play with it, the empress, happening to meet him, desired to see it; when, to her great surprize, she found it contained the names of several illustrious persons destined to slaughter, including her own, with those of Norbanus and Petronius Secundus, captains of the prætorian guards, and of Parthenius, the emperor's chamberlain.

*A conspi-
racy form-
ed against
him.*

To these Domitia immediately communicated the paper; and they resolved, without farther deliberation, to dispatch the tyrant before he had time to put his design in execution. Suetonius tells us, that Domitian perished by a conspiracy of his friends and freedmen, with the privity of his wife^k. The death of Clemens hastened, according to the same writer, his own ruin, either because the cruelty he exercised towards those of his own family, occasioned a general dread and despair, or because it provoked Stephanus, who was freedman and procurator to Domitilla, the wife of Clemens, and besides, was at that time accused of having embezzled part of her effects^l. Be that as it may, Stephanus not only joined the conspirators, but, being a man of great strength, undertook to dispatch the tyrant^m. Domitian is said to have long before had an apprehension, not only of the year and day, but of the hour and manner of his death, having been forewarned of what in the end be-

ⁱ Dio, p. 766.
lib. viii. cap. 10.

^k Suet. cap. 14.

^l Philost. Vit. Apol. Ty.

^m Dio, p. 766, Suet. cap. 17.

fel him, when he was but a child. One night his father Vespasian, who gave great credit to the predictions of astrologers, and retained one of them, named Seleucus, constantly about him, observing that Domitian at supper abstained from mushrooms, derided him as one ignorant of his own fate, since he seemed to be under greater apprehension of poison than of the sword. This remark Domitian ever after remembered, and was always strangely affected by the bare sight of a drawn sword, or any other weapon. From this timidity it was, that, however ambitious, he refused the new and extraordinary honour that was decreed for him; namely, that as often as he was consul, a certain number of Roman knights, chosen by lot, should walk before him amongst his lictors, in their robes, with lances in their hands. When the time, which he chiefly dreaded and suspected drew near, his jealousy increased to such a degree, that he caused the gallery, in which he usually walked, to be set round with a certain stone called phengites, by which images were reflected as in a mirror, so that he could discover what was done behind him.

His jealousy.

The day before his death he ordered some choice fruit, which were presented to him, to be reserved for the next day, adding, "If it be my fortune to use them:" then, turning to those about him, "To-morrow (said he) the moon will appear bloody in Aquarius, and something will happen, which will be much talked of." About midnight he was so terrified, that he leaped out of bed. However, he went next morning to the forum to administer justice, and returned to the palace an hour before mid-day, the time which he chiefly dreaded. Having asked what time of the day it was, one of the conspirators, on purpose to deceive him, told him it was noon. Overjoyed at this information he thought of nothing but abandoning himself to mirth and pleasure. As he was going to bathe, according to the Roman custom, before dinner, Parthenius, his chief chamberlain, told him, he had something of great importance to impart, and such as could not be deferred. The emperor, ordering all his attendants to withdraw, retired to his chamber, where Parthenius introduced Stephanus, who, the better to disguise his design, had appeared for some days with his left arm suspended in a sling, as if it had received some hurt. He presented a memorial to Domitian, wherein he pretended to discover a dangerous conspiracy formed by his cousin Flavius Clemens, whom he averred to be still alive; and by several others, whose names were all set down, with the places of their abode. While the emperor

He seems to have some knowledge of his death.

was

*He is
wounded
by Ste-
phanus,*

was reading the memorial with great attention, Stephanus, drawing suddenly a dagger, which he had kept concealed, struck it into his belly. The emperor, finding himself wounded, called to a boy, who happened to be in the room, to reach him a dagger, which lay under his pillow, and to run for assistance; but under his pillow was found only the scabbard, and the doors were locked and firmly secured. Domitian, notwithstanding his wound, struggled some time with Stephanus, and even threw him with great violence to the ground, striving to wrest the dagger out of his hand, and with his fingers, though cut and mangled, to thrust out his eyes. At length Parthenius, who had withdrawn when Stephanus came in, fearing some of the guards might, in the mean time, come to his relief, opened the door of the chamber, and rushing upon the emperor with Claudianus, Maximus, Satureius, and a celebrated gladiator, dispatched him with several wounds. Many who were not privy to the conspiracy, alarmed at the noise, hastened to the emperor's apartment, and finding him wallowing in his blood, killed Stephanus. The other conspirators made their escape as soon as the murder was perpetrated^a.

and killed.

Yr. of Fl.
2446.
A. D. 96.
U. C. 846.

*He is re-
gretted by
the troops.*

Thus died Domitian, notwithstanding all his precautions, and his pretended divinity, after having lived forty-four years, ten months, and twenty-six days, and reigned fifteen years, and five days. At his death the common people shewed neither grief nor joy; but the soldiers, whose pay he had increased, and with whom he often shared his rapine, bewailed him exceedingly; and would have raised great disturbances, had not their officers, as most of them were concerned in the conspiracy, restrained their fury. The troops quartered in the country of the Getæ were ready to revolt, when they understood he had been assassinated; but the philosopher Dio Chrysostomus, who had retired to that province, checked their rage, by a speech which he made to the mutinous legion upon the guilt of tyrants, and punishments due to such as abuse their power to the oppression of people committed to their care^o. As for the senate, they could not disguise their joy: they assembled in haste; and after having, in the most opprobrious manner imaginable, reviled his memory, they commanded all his images to be torn in pieces. An infinite number of statues of gold and silver, erected to him in the different quarters of the city, were, by their orders, broken and melted

*The joy of
the senate.*

^a Suet. cap. 17. Dio, p. 676. Philost. in Vit. Apol. Ty. p. 485.
^o Suet. cap. 22. Philost. ibid. p. 492.

down; his triumphal arches were overturned, and his name declared infamous: they even enacted a decree, commanding all inscriptions, in which he was mentioned, to be obliterated, his name to be struck out of the consular tables, and his body to be thrown into the Tiber^p. Several ancient inscriptions are still to be seen, in which the name of Domitian is rased^q. All his acts were annulled, and those whom he had banished recalled. A woman, named Phyllis, who had been charged with the care of his education, while he was an infant, caused his body to be privately conveyed upon a bier, like a person of the meanest condition, to a country-house she had at a small distance from the city; where she burnt it, and, carrying the ashes, without being observed, to the temple which she had built for the Flavian family, mixed them with those of Julia the daughter of Titus, whom she had likewise brought up. Domitian was the last emperor of the Flavian family, and likewise the last of those princes who are commonly styled the Twelve Cæsars.

His statues broken, and his acts annulled.

As the celebrated philosopher Apollonius Tyaneus acted a chief part in the late revolutions of the Roman empire, and made at this time a great figure in the world, a succinct account of his life and actions cannot be looked upon as foreign to the present subject, nor be ill received by our readers. Of the other writers, who flourished under Domitian, we shall speak in our notes (W). Apollonius was born

Account of Apollonius Tyaneus.

^p Suet. *ibid.* Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 769. Macrob. Saturn. lib. v. cap. xii. Laët. *Persec.* cap. 3. ^q Goltz. p. 234.

(W) These were Quintilian, Valerius Flaccus, Martial, Statius, Juvenal, and Silius. Marcus Fabius Quintilianus was, according to St. Jerom and Ausonius, a native of Calagorina, now Calahorra, in Old Castile: he studied rhetoric under Domitius Afer: He pleaded several causes at Rome before queen Berenice (1), and consequently under Vespasian; for in his time Berenice came to Rome, and was by Titus sent back to her own country, in the very beginning of his reign. Vespasian having settled a salary upon the professors of eloquence, to be paid yearly out of the treasury, Quintilian was the first who opened a free school at Rome. He discharged that important office with great reputation, and to the satisfaction of all, for the space of twenty years; during which time he acquired great wealth. He then resigned his charge, and wrote a book on the causes of the decay of eloquence (2). When he had finished this treatise, he was prevailed upon by his friends to undertake a more laborious

(1) Quint. lib. iv. cap. 1. (2) Quint. *Præfat.* & lib. vi. p. 177.
work;

born three or four years before the common Christian $\pi\pi\pi$; for he is said to have lived an hundred years, and died soon after

work; his twelve books of rhetoric, which will be ever admired by all persons of taste and judgment. While he was employed in composing this work, Domitian charged him with the education of his sister's grandsons, as we have related in the text (3). He was afterwards honoured with the consular ornaments, at the recommendation of Flavius Clemens, then in great favour with the emperor. Sidonius Apollinaris bestows high encomiums upon Quintilian, and equals him to the most elegant writers of antiquity (4).

C. Valerius Flaccus Setinus Balbus was a native of Padua, as is evident from Martial (5), and not of Setia in Campania, as some have conjectured from the name of Setinus. He wrote an epic poem on the voyage of the Argonauts, divided into eight books, which he began in the reign of Vespasian, to whom it is inscribed, and continued under Domitian; for he was, according to Vossius, prevented by death from putting the last hand to it (6).

The poet M. Valerius Martialis, so famous for his epigrams, was a native of Bilbilis (7), which stood at a small distance from the present city of Calataiud, in the kingdom of Arragon (8). He was born in the reign of Claudius, came to

Rome in that of Nero, being then twenty years old, and lived there thirty years (9), favoured by the emperors, especially by Domitian, whom, on all occasions, he flatters in a most abject manner. Upon that prince's death he left the city, and retired to his own country; where, after three years, which he passed without writing, he was prevailed upon by Terentius Priscus to compose his twelfth book, in which he speaks of the emperors Nerva and Trajan (1). Pliny, in whose commendation he had written an epigram, had a particular kindness and esteem for him; whence he presented him, upon his departure from Rome, with a sum of money to defray the expences of his journey (2). As to his writings, the emperor Lucius Verus used to call him his Virgil (3); but few, either before or since that prince's time, seem to have entertained such a high opinion of his compositions. Scaliger approves of what he himself wrote of his epigrams. Most critics have found fault with his thoughts, his style, and, above all, with his puns, which are often very low, and with his pretended witticisms (4). Besides, some of his epigrams are, for their lewdness, infamous, perhaps beyond any thing written in the Latin tongue.

Statius flourished at the same

(3) Quint. lib. iv. Præfat.

& lib. ii. car. ver. 190. & lib. ix. ver. 318.

epigr. 62, 77.

epigr. 18.

Lat. p. 46.

epigr. 34.

Ver. p. 15.

(4) Sid. Apollin. lib. v. epist. 10.

(5) Mart. lib. i.

(6) Mart. lib. xii.

(7) Mart. lib. xii.

(8) Voss. Poet.

(9) Mart. lib. x.

(1) Lamprid. Vix.

(2) Vide Bail. Poet. p. 412.

after the accession of Nerva to the empire, which happened in the ninety-sixth year of the Christian æra. The surname of

time; but is never mentioned by Martial, which some ascribe to jealousy, Statius being highly esteemed by Domitian, on account of his making, with extraordinary ease, extemporary verses upon any subject whatever. He wrote two epic poems; namely, the *Thebais*, comprised in twelve books, and the *Achilleis*, which consists only of two, the poet being prevented by death from accomplishing that work (5). They are both inscribed to Domitian. Besides these poems, he wrote several other pieces, upon various occasions, which have likewise reached us, under the title of *Sylvæ*, and are comprehended in five books. His compositions were much esteemed at Rome in his own time, and are still admired by the young poets; nay, Julius Scaliger is of opinion, that of all the ancient poets, he comes nearest to the inimitable Virgil. But better judges look upon Statius rather as a bad historian than a good poet, and despise his bombast style, and quaint expressions. His *Sylvæ*, which were for the most part composed extemporaneously, and without premeditation, are by the critics more esteemed than his epic poems, there being in them some very good thoughts, mixed with such as are quite trivial and low (6).

Decius Junius Juvenalis was contemporary with Statius and Martial, and continued to write

under Nerva and Trajan. He was born at Aquinum, whence he came to Rome when he was very young, and gained great credit by his *Satires*, which were read by many Romans, who perused no other book (7). A player, in great favour at court, offended at some verses of his seventh satire, had interest enough with the emperor to get him removed from Rome, and sent into Egypt, to command a legion quartered in the utmost bounds of that province; where he died soon after of grief, being fourscore when he was obliged to undertake that journey.

Caius Silius Italicus wrote a poem, highly commended by Martial (8), on the second Punic war. Before he applied himself to the study of poetry, he had pleaded many years at the bar, and had even been consul; which office he discharged the year that Nero was killed. He is not, by our modern critics, much esteemed as a poet; but greatly commended for the purity of his style, wherein he is thought to excel all the writers of his time (9).

Several other poets are mentioned by Martial, as flourishing at this time; namely, Curtius Montanus, Turnus, and Scæva Memor, who were brothers; Aruntius Stella, Codrus or Cordus, Paccius, Fauftus, Rubrenus, Lappa, M. Unicus, Ligurinus, Theodorus, Canius, Licinianus, Voconius Victor,

(5) Bail. Poet. p. 425.
lib. xxviii. p. 374.
Bail. Poet. p. 392.

(6) Ibid. p. 426.
(8) Mart. lib. iv. epig. 14.

(7) Ammian.
(9) Vide

He applies himself to the study of the Pythagoric philosophy.

The austerity of his life.

of Tyaneus he borrowed from the city of Tyana in Cappadocia, the place of his nativity. His birth was foretold, and accompanied, if the author of his life is to be credited¹, by many prodigies. When he was but fourteen years old, he applied himself to the study of the Pythagoric philosophy, first at Tarsus, the capital of Cilicia, and afterwards at *Ægæ*, another city of the same province, under the direction of one Euxenes. He retired at the age of sixteen to a house in the country, where he led a life of great austerity, abstaining, pursuant to the maxims of his sect, from all manner of flesh, suffering his hair to grow, going barefoot, and clad only in linen, that he might use nothing proceeding from any living creature. From his country residence, he removed, after some time, to the temple of *Æsculapius* in the city of *Ægæ*, where he soon became known, great numbers of votaries flocking daily to the temple of that pretended deity, for the preservation or recovery of their health. There Apollonius commenced censor and reformer of manners, having already, it seems, an extraordinary opinion of his own virtue².

His father dying, he took possession of his inheritance; but reserved only a small share of it for himself, the greatest part of it he yielded to his brother, who led a vicious and dissolute life, from which he was by this generosity retrieved; the rest, except a very small portion, he divided amongst his necessitous relations. Being thus disengaged from every thing that could divert him from the study of philosophy, and the practice of virtue, he passed five years in silence, agreeably to the custom of the Pythagoreans. During that time, he appeased several tumults and seditions in Cilicia and Pamphylia, especially at *Aspenda*, one of the chief cities in the latter province, where the populace were ready to burn the chief magistrate alive, for not obliging some of the wealthy inhabitants to produce their corn during a famine, and sell it at a reasonable price. He went afterwards to *Antioch*, to *Ephesus*, and to several cities, where he revived the worship of some deities or idols, which now began to be neglected. He

¹ Philost. Vit. Apoll. Ty. lib. i. cap. 3.

² Ibid. cap. 6—9.

and *Passienus Paulus* (1). *Suidas* mentions one *Epaphroditus*, author of several books upon grammar; which have been long since lost. He was a native of *Boeotia*, had been slave

to *Modestus*, governor of *Egypt*; but afterwards became famous at *Rome* in the reign of *Nero*, and died in that of *Nerva*, in the seventy-fifth year of his age (2).

(1) Voss. Poet. Lat. p. 47.

(2) *Suid.* p. 966.

practised

practised every where secret mysteries, to which those alone were admitted, who had observed silence for the space of four years. He assumed the character of a legislator, pretending to require nothing of others but what he had performed himself: he even boasted of a thorough knowledge of all languages, without ever having learned them; and had the impudence to declare, that the most secret recesses of men's hearts, and their most private thoughts, lay open to him *. However, he had yet but seven disciples; and these too abandoned him, as soon as he had declared his intention of travelling into India, to visit the philosophers there, known by the name of Bramans, or Brachmanes; so that he left Antioch, attended only by two domestics: but at Nineve was joined by Damis, a native of that place, who, of all the disciples he ever had, proved the most devoted to him; for he observed with great attention, and carefully registered, not only his most minute actions, but even his words. These memoirs falling afterwards into the hands of Julia Augusta, the wife of the emperor Severus, she imparted them to Philostratus, who chiefly copied from them what he wrote of his pretended hero. Apollonius, on his journey from Nineve to Babylon, acquired the art of interpreting oracles delivered by birds.

His impudence and presumption.

He arrives at Babylon.

He travels to India.

Upon his arrival at Babylon, he was received by the Magis of the place, with whom he often conferred in private. He soon left Babylon, and set out for India; where he was received with great marks of esteem by a king named Phraothas, of whom Philostratus relates wonders; and by him introduced to Hiarchus, the chief of the Bramans, who at that time was but eighteen years old. Apollonius passed four months with these priests, held frequent conferences with the chief men amongst them, to which not even Damis was admitted, and ever after entertained the highest opinion of their sect. After he had learned all the mysteries of their profession, he left India, and returning by sea, landed at the mouth of the Euphrates, or rather the Tigris; went from thence by land to Babylon, then to Nineve, and from Nineve to Antioch. After a short stay in this city, he removed to Ionia, and settled in that country, residing sometimes at Ephesus, and sometimes at Smyrna †.

He is said to have undertaken with incredible success the reformation of manners, first at Ephesus, and afterwards in the other cities of Ionia; reclaiming, partly by his precepts,

* Philost. Vit. Apoll. Ty. lib. i. cap. 10—25.
lib. iii. cap. 15, 16.

† Idem.

Returns to Asia, and there undertakes the reformation of manners.

and partly by his exemplary life, such as were abandoned to all manner of lewdness and iniquity ². From Ionia he went to Ilium, where he embarked for Lesbos, and from thence sailed to Athens; in which city he reformed innumerable abuses, and entirely abolished the inhuman spectacles of gladiators. He travelled all over Greece, reviving the ancient superstition of the Greeks, and establishing the idolatrous worship of the gods. The Eleans invited him to the sports, which were to be celebrated on occasion of the one hundred and tenth Olympiad. He complied with their invitation, and, by his warm exhortations, inspired both Greeks and foreigners, with the love of virtue, and abhorrence of vice. At Corinth he was kindly received, and ever after admired, by Demetrius, the most celebrated Cynic of those days, and his disciple Menippus. At Lacedæmon, where he passed great part of the winter, he is said to have persuaded the inhabitants to resume their ancient manner of living ³. In the beginning of the spring he sailed from Lacedæmon to Crete, and from thence to Rome, where he resided till he was obliged to quit the city, in consequence of an edict enacted by Nero, driving all philosophers out of Rome.

He encourages Galba to revolt from Nero.

He then retired to Cadiz, where, in a private conference, he encouraged Galba to revolt from Nero, and assume the sovereignty. From Cadiz he crossed over to Africa, from Africa he returned to Hetruria, and thence passed to Sicily, in which country he received intelligence of Nero's death. However, he would not return to Rome, but sailed to Achaia or Greece, where he remained the winter, and early in the spring went into Egypt, followed by prodigious crowds. Vespasian, while he was in Egypt, went to visit Apollonius: he consulted him in private about the state of his affairs, and paid great deference to his judgment. Dio and Euphrates, two celebrated philosophers, advised Vespasian to renounce the sovereignty, after he had overcome Vitellius, and restore the republic to its former liberty; but Apollonius opposed their sentiments. Vespasian followed the opinion of Apollonius, who took the liberty to instruct him how to govern with equity and moderation. Vespasian offered to reward him with great generosity for his excellent precepts; but the philosopher would not accept the least acknowledgement ².

Is consulted by Vespasian.

From Alexandria Vespasian departed for Rome, and Apollonius travelled into Ethiopia, with a design to visit the

² Philost. Vit. Apol. Ty. lib. iv. cap. 1, 2.
cap. 3—11.

³ Ibid. lib. v. cap. 3—14.

² Idem. lib. iv.

philosophers of that country. Of his thirty disciples, ten only accompanied him in this journey, the others choosing to remain at Alexandria. He was at first received very coldly by the Ethiopian philosophers, who had been prejudiced against him by Euphrates; but they were soon reconciled to each other, and held several conferences, which Apollonius interrupted to view the sources of the Nile; but he did not go beyond the third cataract. He returned to Egypt about the time that Titus took the city of Jerusalem. Next year Titus returned to Rome, and was met by Apollonius at Argos, who now travelled all over Phœnicia, Ionia, and Cilicia; visited several cities of Greece; and, if Codinus is to be believed, went to Byzantium, and there erected several talismans, or magical figures, which remained till the year 870, when the emperor Basilus caused them to be removed^a. From Byzantium he returned to Greece, and from thence to Rome; where he excited the people against the emperor Domitian, and exhorted Nerva, who was afterwards emperor, to head the insurrection. Domitian was informed of his private practices, and at the same time told, that he had sacrificed a child, in order to discover, by viewing its entrails, what successes would attend Nerva, if he engaged in the conspiracy. In consequence of this information, the emperor commanded the governor of Asia, whither Apollonius was already retired, to seize and send him in chains to Rome. But Apollonius, before the order arrived, had left Asia, in order to return to Rome. At Puteoli he found Demetrius, the celebrated Cynic, who acquainted him with the emperor's edict, ordering all the philosophers to depart Rome; and at the same time exhorted him to conceal himself, lest he should fall a sacrifice to the rage of Domitian, who bore an irreconcilable hatred to all philosophers, and to him in particular. Apollonius replied, that he could not follow his advice, without betraying Nerva; and that he was very sure it was not in the power of the tyrant to put him to death. He therefore pursued his journey in the habit peculiar to philosophers; but obliged Damis, his only companion, to quit it, lest he should be discovered and imprisoned^b.

*Travels
into Ethi-
opia.*

*Goes to
Rome.*

He no sooner arrived at Rome, than the emperor ordered Casperius Ælianus, captain of the prætorian guards, to seize him. Casperius, who had a particular veneration for him, on pretence of examining him in private, instructed

*Where he is
seized and
imprisoned
by Domi-
tian's or-
ders.*

^a Georg. Codin, Origines Constantinop. cap. 2—6.

^b Philost. lib. vii.

*Is brought
before the
emperor,
and by him
declared
innocent.*

him how to make his defence, when summoned before the judges; and then, as he durst not dismiss him, committed him to prison. After he had been confined six days, he was brought before the emperor, who examined him concerning the designs of Nerva. Apollonius declared, that Nerva had never entertained the least thought of conspiring against him, or assuming the sovereignty. Domitian, finding he could draw no satisfactory answer from him, ordered his beard to be shaved, a great insult to a philosopher; and commanded him to be led back to prison, loaded with chains, from which, however, he was two days after discharged, at the request of Casperius. While he was in bonds, he assured Damis, who attended him even in confinement, that the emperor, notwithstanding his unlimited power, could not hurt him; and so saying, drew, with great ease, his leg out of the chain. He was brought again before the emperor; who, after having examined him in the presence of many persons of distinction, declared him innocent, and afterwards had a private conference with him, in which Apollonius displayed the great evils that must necessarily ensue from the prince's giving ear to informers. "As for myself (said he), I am not under the least apprehension: you may cause me to be seized; but put me to death you cannot: that the laws of fate, and my destiny, will not allow." Apollonius, having thus spoken, disappeared, and was seen that evening at Puteoli, three days journey distant from Rome^c.

*Is acquainted
with Domitian's
death the
very minute
it happens.*

From Puteoli he passed over into Sicily, and from thence into Greece, where he remained two years, followed and admired by great multitudes of people of all ranks and ages, whom, by his precepts and example, he animated to despise wealth, and place their whole happiness in the pursuit of virtue. From Greece he returned to Ionia, residing partly at Smyrna, and partly at Ephesus; but frequently visiting all the cities of that province. While he was haranguing a numerous assembly at Ephesus, the minute that Domitian was slain, he suddenly lowered his voice, apparently seized with fear; but nevertheless pursued his discourse for some time, though faintly, and often stopping, as if he had been intent upon another subject. At length he left off speaking, fixed his eyes stedfastly on the ground, and, after a short silence, "Strike home (he cried), strike the tyrant home." As the numerous assembly was greatly surprised, he no sooner recollected himself, than he bid them be of good cheer, and rejoice: "For the tyrant (added he),

^c Philoſt. lib. vii. cap. 3, 12, 14, 17.

is dead ; he is just now expired ^d." The same circumstance is related by Dio Cassius, as an event not to be doubted ; nay, he adds, that Apollonius, during his reverie, named Stephanus, crying out so as to be heard by the whole assembly, "Courage, brave Stephanus ! courage ! dispatch the tyrant ^e." Nerva, who succeeded Domitian, had no sooner taken possession of the empire, than he wrote to Apollonius, inviting him to Rome. The philosopher replied, that, by the decrees of fate, they were never more to see one another. However, he wrote the emperor a letter filled with excellent precepts for governing with equity and moderation. This paper he sent by Damis, whom he charged to recite to the emperor many excellent maxims of government, the result of his experience.

Is invited to Rome by Nerva ; but refuses to go thither.

While Damis was at Rome, he received advice, that Apollonius had disappeared ; he therefore concluded, that he had dispatched him to Rome, that he might not be present at his death ; hence he is generally thought to have died this year, the first of Nerva's reign, and ninety-sixth of the Christian æra (U). This philosopher was remarkable for his pride, arrogance, and presumption ^f. He imagined himself possessed of every virtue in an eminent degree ; arrogated upon all occasions the character of censor, legislator, and instructor ; pretended to know every thing, to foresee future events, to be acquainted with the most hidden thoughts of those with whom he conversed ; nay, he suffered himself to be acknowledged as a god, and re-

He disappears.

^d Philost. lib. viii. cap. 20. cap. 14, 15, 19.

^e Dio, p. 768.

^f Philost. lib. i.

(U) Damis, in his memoirs, made no mention of his death ; and Philostratus declares, that in his time no one could give any probable account of it. Some pretended he died at Ephesus ; others related, that he went into a temple at Lindus in the island of Rhodes, and was never afterwards seen. Philostratus assures us, that though he had travelled into several countries, he could no where find his tomb, nor hear any certain account of the manner of his death (1). This succinct

account of the life of Apollonius is swelled by Philostratus with a great number of miracles and predictions. Amongst other prodigies wrought by his hero, he tells us, that he restored to life a young woman of a consular family ; but, at the same time, seems to doubt, whether or no she was quite dead. Some of the fathers have been at great pains to prove him an impostor ; and as to his miracles, they were ascribed to magic.

(1) Philost. lib. viii. cap. 13.

*Honours
paid him
after his
death.*

ceived divine worship from the multitude. Philostratus extols his disinterestedness, and the purity of his manners ^s. As he maintained the doctrine of the metempsychosis, or transmigration of souls, he publicly adored a lion, pretending, that the soul of Amasis, one of the ancient kings of Egypt, had passed into that animal (W). As no person could give any certain account of the death of Apollonius, his countrymen, the inhabitants of Tyana, believed him immortal, and revered him as a divinity. His images were erected in many temples; and the emperors, instead of suppressing, countenanced this superstition, by the honours which they themselves paid to the impostor (X). But notwithstanding the great esteem which several of the emperors had for him, and his many pretended miracles, he was, at the beginning of the fourth century, generally be-

2 Philost. Vit. Apoll. lib. v. cap. 14.

(W) Philostratus endeavours to excuse, in the best manner he can, his hero for quarreling with the philosopher Euphrates, on whom he lays all the blame. Pliny the younger, who was intimately acquainted with Euphrates, bestows the highest encomiums upon him (1); and Arrian, in his comments upon Epictetus, not only extols his eloquence, but commends him greatly for having lived like a philosopher before he assumed the habit peculiar to that profession (2). He died in the beginning of Adrian's reign, with whose permission he terminated the infirmities attending old age with a draught of poison (3). He published some writings against Apollonius, which Philostratus promises to refute (4). Eunapius seems to ascribe other works to him upon more important subjects, by which he gained great reputation (5).

(X) Adrian collected, and deposited in the palace at Antium, a great number of his letters (6). Antonius Caracalla honoured him with divine worship, and consecrated a temple to him (7). The emperor Alexander kept his image in a private place of his palace, together with the images of our Saviour, of Abraham, and of several princes, who had governed with equity and moderation (8). Vopiscus tells us, that he read in certain memoirs, and also heard of persons of credit, that the emperor Aurelian being resolved to give up the city of Tyana to be plundered by his soldiers, Apollonius appeared to him, and diverted him from that design; and adds, that the emperor, convinced by that miraculous apparition, that Apollonius was a god, devoted to him an image, a temple, and a statue (9).

(1) Plin. lib. i. epist. 10.

lib. ii. cap. 8.

cap. 10.

lib. viii. cap. 13, 14.

Vit. Veri, p. 123.

(2) Arrian. Epict. lib. iii. cap. 15. &

(3) Dio, lib. lxxix. p. 791.

(4) Eunap. in Vit. Sophist. Præfat.

(5) Dio, lib. lxxvii. p. 878.

(6) Philost. lib. i.

(7) Philost. lib. i.

(8) Lamp. in

(9) Vopisc. in Vit. Aurel.

held as an impostor and a magician. Philostratus has preserved several letters written by Apollonius, most of them very short, with a long apology, which he had composed with a design to pronounce before Domitian. Besides this apology, and a great number of letters to persons of all ranks and conditions, he wrote a treatise upon judicial astrology, comprised in four books^b, and another upon sacrifices, wherein he pretended to demonstrate with what kind of victims each deity was most pleased. The former treatise was not much esteemed: but the latter was received with general applause.

His works.



C H A P. LV.

From the Death of Domitian, the last of the twelve Cæsars, to the Death of Trajan, who brought the Empire to its utmost Grandeur and Extent.

THE death of Domitian was no sooner divulged, than the senate with one voice declared M. Cocceius Nerva emperor. He was a native of Narnia in Umbria, but his family came originally from the island of Crete; so that he was neither by birth a Roman, nor descended from an Italian family (Y). He was born, according to Dio Cassius, on the seventeenth of March, in the eighteenth year of Tiberius's reign, and 32d of the Christian æra; and was by Nero, in the twelfth year of his reign, honoured with the prætorship, and a statue in the palace, having, by his elegant poems (for he was one of the best poets of his time), gained the affection of that prince, who even inscribed some of his poetical pieces to him. Pliny speaks of his epigrams, and commends them¹. He was consul with Vespasian in the year 71, and with Domitian in 90.

M. Cocceius Nerva emperor.

His family.

He is celebrated by all the ancients as a prince of a most mild and humane temper, of great moderation and generosity, who looked upon himself as raised to the empire, not for his own advantage, but for that of his people; and

His humanity, generosity, &c.

^b Philost. lib. iv. cap. 6.

¹ Plin. lib. iii. epist. 9.

(Y) However, his father, ther, had been honoured in grandfather, and great-grandfather, Rome with the consular dignity.

indeed

*Narrowly
escapes
death un-
der Domi-
tian.*

indeed the happiness and welfare of those who lived under him were, during the short time he reigned, his only end and pursuit. He seems to have been naturally timorous^k; and some writers charge both him and Trajan with excessive drinking. Apollonius Tyaneus was the first who solicited him to assume the sovereignty, or at least to deliver Rome from the tyranny of Domitian. Nerva hearkened to him, but his courage failed him when the design was to be put in execution^l. However, Domitian, either acquainted with this design, or giving credit to the astrologers, who advised him to beware of Nerva, since his nativity seemed to promise him the empire, confined him to Tarentum in the year 94; and would have put him to death, had not a more kind astrologer assured the emperor, that Nerva, who was of a weak constitution, and subject to many infirmities, would die in a few days^m (Z).

Yr. of Fl.
2444.
A. D. 96.
U. C. 844.

*Is acknow-
ledged em-
peror by
the senate
and sol-
diery.*

Domitian being killed on the eighteenth of September of the year 96, Nerva was the same day declared emperor by the senate, and acknowledged by the prætorian guards, notwithstanding their concern for the death of the late emperor, which they would have revenged, had they not been restrained by Petronius Secundus, one of their captains, and by Parthenius, Domitian's chief chamberlainⁿ. Nerva had scarce assumed the sovereignty, when a false report was spread, that Domitian was still alive, and the account of his death only an artifice to discover the designs of such as he suspected: hence diffamy seized all, and the crowd about the new emperor dispersed in a moment. Nerva himself, naturally wary and timorous, was struck speechless, be-

^k Aur. Vict. in Vit. Trajan. ^l Philostr. in Vit. Apoll. Tyan. lib. vii. cap. 3. ^m Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 769. ⁿ Plin. Panegy. Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 769.

(Z) Aurelius Victor writes, that Nerva, dreading the cruelty of Domitian, had retired to Gaul, and was there when he received the news of the tyrant's death, and his own elevation to the empire (1). On the other hand, Dio Cassius takes no notice of his banishment, but supposes him to have been at Rome when Domitian was murdered; for he tells us, that Parthenius, and the other conspi-

rators, offered the empire, before the assassination of Domitian, to several persons; who, regarding such an offer as a snare laid for their destruction, declined it: but that at length Nerva, who daily expected to be sacrificed to the jealousy of the emperor, was prompted, by his own fear, to accept the sovereign power, as the only means of preserving his life (2).

(1) Aur. Vict. in Epit. (2) Dio, lib. lxxvii. p. 767.

trayed

trayed great dread in his countenance, and, fallen from the highest hopes, expected nothing but instant death, till Parthenius assured him, that the report was quite groundless. Then, recovering his former temper, he went first to the camp of the prætorian guards, and thence, after he had secured them by a promise of the usual donative, to the senate, where he was received with the greatest marks imaginable of esteem and affection. Many congratulatory speeches were made on this occasion; but that of Arrius Antoninus, grandfather to the emperor T. Antoninus by his mother, was of a singular nature. Embracing the new emperor, with whom he had long lived in great intimacy, "I am come (said he) with the rest, to congratulate the senate, the people of Rome, and the provinces of the empire, upon your advancement to this high post; but cannot pay the same compliment to you, who, after having, by your wisdom and virtue, happily escaped the rage of so many wicked princes, plunge yourself into new dangers and troubles, being exposed to the censure and hatred both of your friends and foes, especially of the former, who will not fail, if any of their suits are denied, to become your most implacable enemies."

Nerva, confirmed in the empire both by the senate and soldiery, blended together public liberty^p and sovereign power; for, under him, the Romans enjoyed all the former, and felt none of the evil effects of the latter^q. He immediately released all those who had been, under the late emperor, arraigned of treason, and recalled such as had been banished under colour of the same crime^r, causing their lands and inheritances to be restored to them, without the least deduction. However, he would not suffer Licinianus, who had been exiled for debauching a Vestal, to return to Italy; but allowed him to pass the remainder of his life in Sicily^s. He enacted severe laws against informers; and caused all the slaves and freedmen to be put to death, who had accused their masters and patrons. Besides these, many other informers were publicly executed, and, among the rest, the philosopher Seras. At the same time he published an edict, forbidding, agreeably to the ancient laws of Rome, a slave or freedman to appear against his master in any accusation whatsoever; and ordering, that no person should, for the future, be accused of violated majesty, or prosecuted for living after the manner of the Jews, by which words Dio, without all doubt,

The Romans happy under him.

Punishes all informers.

Abolishes the law of majesty.

* Aur. Vict. in Epit.
lib. ix. Epist. 13.
lib. iii. cap. 20.

p Tacit. Vit. Agric. cap. 3.
r Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 769.

q Plin.
* Euseb.

*Redresses
grievances.*

meant the Christians. He solemnly swore, that no senator should ever by his order be put to death; and religiously observed his oath, though some of that body conspired against him, as we shall presently relate. All the goods and effects belonging to individuals, which he found in the palace, he ordered to be immediately restored to the proprietors; lessened the taxes; delivered the Jews from the cruelties and oppressions of the collectors of the public revenues; and, to the great satisfaction of the Romans, annulled the law of Augustus, ordering the twentieth part of each inheritance and legacy to be paid in to the exchequer.

*His generosity
towards
the people.*

He allowed no gold or silver statues to be erected to him, retrenched all superfluous expences, abolishing, for that purpose divers sacrifices, and public shews; but as he still wanted money to relieve the necessitous citizens, and reward his friends, he sold great part of the gold and silver plate, and rich furniture, both of his own house, and of the imperial palace, with several houses and estates. He expended a vast sum upon the purchase of land, to relieve the poor of Rome, appointing some senators of known integrity[†] to divide it among the indigent[‡]. From several medals of this year it appears, that he twice bestowed considerable sums on the people, besides the lands, and a large quantity of corn[§]. The children of such as were poor he caused to be brought up, in all the cities of Italy, at the public expence. He eased not only Italy, but all the provinces, of the heavy impositions with which they had been burdened by Vespasian and Domitian; and utterly abolished the tax upon all carriages, which was generally looked upon as an insufferable grievance: hence the senate caused several medals to be struck, to perpetuate the remembrance of so great a favour. Of the many instances of his disinterestedness recorded by the ancients, we shall only relate the following: Atticus, a citizen of Athens, father to the famous Herodes Atticus, of whom we shall speak in the reign of T. Antoninus, having discovered in his house a large treasure, applied to Nerva to know how he should dispose of it. The emperor, who had no turn to avarice, answered, "Utere; use it:" but Atticus, not thinking himself secure, wrote to him a second letter, acquainting him, that the treasure was too great for a private person, and that he was therefore afraid to use it. To this the generous prince replied in two words, "Ergo abutere;

His disinterestedness.

[†] Plin. lib. vii. epist. 31.
[‡] Plin. lib. vii. epist. 31.
[§] Plin. lib. vii. epist. 31.

[‡] Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 770. Zonar. p. 199. Chron. Alexand.
[§] Birag. Numif. p. 143.

then

then abuse it ;" importing that the treasure was his without reserve ; and that he might dispose of it as he thought fit ².

Nerva renewed the law of Domitian, prohibiting the castration of children ; and by one edict confirmed all the grants of that prince. He published a law, forbidding a man's marrying his own niece, which was first allowed in the reign of Claudius ; applied himself with great care to the reformation of manners ; was assiduous in the administration of justice ; and, in short, behaved in such manner towards all, that he used to say, he believed he might resign the empire, and return with safety to a private life, not being conscious to himself of having taken one step that could give any manifest motive of offence ⁷. He was perhaps too kind to such as were altogether unworthy of his favours ; a circumstance in his conduct which gave occasion to some persons to complain of his lenity and indulgence (U). As soon as public liberty was restored, all who had suffered by false accusations under Domitian ², flocked to the senate, demanding, that condign punishment might be inflicted on such as had informed against them. The senate hearkened to their request, and punished some with death, others with banishment ; but not without great partiality, sparing those of their own body. On this occasion Pliny boldly accused Publicus Certus, who was not only of the senatorial order, but had been named by the late emperor to the consulship with Vestius Proculus. The senate, having attempted in vain to persuade Pliny to drop the prosecution, referred the whole affair to the emperor, who contented himself with confirming the consulship to Vestius, and naming another to that dignity in the room of Certus, who died soon after of grief.

Some of his laws.

His too great lenity and indulgence.

² Philost. in Vit. Sophist. p. 546.
⁷ Plin. lib. ix. Epist. 13.

⁷ Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 770.

(U) Having one day invited to his table, besides many other persons of distinction, Junius Mauricus, who had been banished by Domitian, and Fabricius Veiento, a consular, who, with his secret machinations, had occasioned the ruin of many illustrious citizens in the preceding reign, one of the guests happened to mention Catullus Messalinus, a notorious informer

under Domitian, when the emperor, hearing him named, "What would Catullus do, (said he), were he alive now?" "If he were alive now, (replied Mauricus with great freedom), he would be at table with us ;" which was an oblique reflection on the emperor's lenity and kindness to Veiento, and others, whom he ought rather to have punished than caressed (1).

(1) Plin. lib. iv. Epist. 22.

*Virginius
Rufus dies.*

*Calpurnius
Crassus con-
spires a-
gainst Ner-
va;*

*who par-
dons him.*

*The præto-
rian guards
raise a tu-
mult.*

Nerva entered upon his third consulship on the calends of January, which was the first after his accession to the empire; and chose for his colleague L. Virginius Rufus, to whom the soldiers had frequently offered the empire. As Virginius was rising, after he had assumed the fasces, to pronounce a speech in praise of the emperor, according to the usual custom, he dropped a book out of his hand, and, as he stooped to take it up, fell himself, and had the misfortune to break his leg; an accident which, as he was then in the eighty-third year of his age, occasioned his death. He was, by the emperor's order, buried with the utmost pomp and magnificence; and Cornelius Tacitus the historian, whom Nerva raised to the consulate in his room, pronounced his funeral oration ^a. Pliny wrote another panegyric upon him in a letter addressed to one of his friends, acquainting him with the death of that illustrious citizen. This year Calpurnius Crassus, descended from the ancient and illustrious family of the Crassi, conspired, with some others, against Nerva; who, being immediately informed of their wicked designs, sent for them, and carried them with him to the public theatre. There he placed them next to himself, and presented them, as Titus had done on the like occasion, the swords of the gladiators, which were always brought to, and viewed by, the emperor ^b. We are not informed what effect this instance of generosity had upon the conspirators. All we know is, that Crassus, having confessed the crime, was, with his wife, banished to Tarentum. The senate were for condemning both him, and his accomplices, to death; but the emperor, alleging the oath he had taken not to spill the blood of any senator, restrained their zeal. Fronto, to whom Nerva had resigned the fasces, offended at the prince's unseasonable clemency, said boldly, that "it was a great misfortune to have a prince, under whom all things were criminal and forbidden; but a still greater to be governed by one, under whom all things were allowed." The emperor was so far from resenting this freedom, that from this time he acted with more severity, taking for his counsellors such of the senators as were persons of great experience, and known integrity, and dispatching, with their advice, all matters of consequence.

It was at this period, that the prætorian guards, headed by Ælianus Casperius their commander, occasioned disturbances in the city, under colour of revenging the death of Domitian; slew to the palace, and besieged Nerva, de-

^a Plin. lib. ii. epist. 1.

^b Dio, p. 770. Viâ. Epit.

manding that all those who had been concerned in the assassination of the late emperor, might be delivered up to them, or publicly executed. Nerva, though naturally timorous, behaved on this occasion with incredible firmness; for offering his bare neck to the incensed soldiery, he begged they would be satisfied with his life, and spare those to whom he was indebted for the empire, and whom, on that account, he could not in honour abandon: but his resolution did not avail; he was in the end constrained to condemn those, whom he studied to preserve at the expence of his own life. The soldiers, without being in the least moved by his intreaties, cut in pieces Petronius Secundus, Parthenius, and the other conspirators^d. They even obliged the emperor to return them public thanks before the people, for exterminating the worst and most wicked of men.

Nerva is obliged to comply with their unjust demands.

This insolence of the soldiery eventually proved very advantageous to the empire; for Nerva, finding himself despised on account of his infirmities and old age, resolved to name some person for his successor, who should be able both to support him, and to govern with equity and moderation after his death. He was not without many relations and friends; but as he had more at heart the welfare of the empire than the grandeur of his family, he chose Ulpian Trajan, the greatest and most deserving person of that age, for his successor, and at the same time adopted him in the Capitol, declaring his adoption with a loud voice to this effect: "With my hearty wishes for the prosperity of the senate and the people of Rome, and that what I do may prove fortunate to them and myself, I declare Marcus Ulpian Trajan my son." He afterwards gave him the title of Cæsar, with that of Germanicus, which he himself seems to have assumed about this time, invested him with the tribunitia power, and even honoured him with the title of emperor; so that he created him not only his successor, but partner in the empire: at the same time he appointed him consul for the ensuing year^e. The adoption of Trajan, which was received with great joy both by the senate and people, suppressed the disorders committed by the soldiery, who immediately returned to their duty.

He adopts Ulpian Trajan.

In the following year he entered upon his fourth consulship, having Ulpian Trajan, now the second time consul, for his colleague; but died, according to some, on the twenty-first, according to others, on the twenty-seventh, of January. Having heated himself in chiding with great acrimony the celebrated informer Aquilius Regulus, he was

The death of Nerva.

^e Plin. Pan.

^d Vict. in Epit.

^e Dio, lib. lxxix. p. 770.

seized

*Is ranked
amongst
the gods.*

seized with a fever, which, as he was weak, and advanced in years, soon put a period to his life, after he had reigned sixteen months and eight or nine days. He had lived, according to Dio Cassius^f, sixty-five years, ten months, and as many days; according to Eutropius, seventy-one; and, according to St. Jerom, seventy-three years^g. He died in the Sallustian gardens, whence his body was carried by the senate to the tomb of Augustus^h. He was ranked amongst the gods, and Trajan, out of gratitude, erected several temples to him both in Rome and the provincesⁱ. He was a prince of great wisdom, generosity, and moderation; but some of the provinces were more grievously oppressed in his reign than in that of Domitian, the governors, who dreaded Domitian, presuming upon the lenity and forbearance of his successor, to enrich themselves at the expence of the unhappy people committed to their care. These grievances Nerva would not have failed to redress, had he lived long enough to know them.

Yr. of Fl.

2446.

A. D. 98.

U. C. 846.

*Trajan,
his family,
ancestors,
and prefer-
ments.*

Trajan was a Spaniard both by birth and extraction, descended rather of an ancient than an illustrious family, born in Italica near Seville, now known, according to some, by the name of Old Seville, according to others, by that of Alcala del Rio. His father, named also Trajan, had been honoured with the consulship, distinguished with triumphal ornaments, and raised by Vespasian to the rank of a patrician. Trajan, commander of the tenth legion, who signalized himself at the taking of Japha, was father to the present emperor, who was born in the twelfth year of the reign of Claudius, and 52d of the Christian æra. He followed the profession of arms from his early youth, and served ten years in quality of tribune^k. He checked the pride of the Parthians while he was yet very young, and defeated their measures with the reputation of his name. But he then commanded, in all likelihood, under his father, to whom he gave, when emperor, the title of Parthicus, as appears from various medals^l. He was prætor in the year 86, and consul in 91, with Acilius Glabrio. Soon after his consulship he withdrew to Spain, dreading the cruelty of Domitian, and led a retired life, till he was recalled by that prince, and appointed governor of Lower Germany. In this office he performed nothing which his panegyrist thought worth mentioning, since he only says, that while he governed in Germany he gained the affec-

^f Dio, lib. lxxix. p. 770.

Epit.
Pan.

^g Euseb. Chron.

^h Plin. Panegyr. Eutrop. Sid. Car. vii. ver. 113.

ⁱ Spanh. lib. vii. p. 851.

^k Vici.

^l Plin.

tions of the soldiery; but notwithstanding their inviolable attachment, never entertained the least thought of revolting from the worst of princes, to whom he had sworn allegiance.

He still continued in this government when Nerva adopted him for his son, and appointed him his successor, in the empire. To this choice Nerva was impelled by the extraordinary merit of Trajan, and a sincere desire of continuing to all the nations subject to the empire, that happiness which they enjoyed in his reign. Trajan possessed, in an eminent degree, all those qualities which form a great, an excellent prince. He was, when preferred to the empire, in the forty-second, or as some insist, the forty-fifth year of his age, and consequently neither subject to the vices of youth, rashness and precipitation, nor to the weakness and indolence attending old age. His body was robust and inured to fatigue; his countenance comely and majestic; his stature regular and tall; and his behaviour extremely engaging^m. He was not himself a man of learning, having from his childhood been brought up in a camp, but encouraged in others what he himself wanted. As to military affairs, he was, without dispute, the best commander of his age, and equal to the greatest generals of antiquity. In every duty of war he was indefatigable; he marched always on foot at the head of the army, even after he was emperor, and crossing immense countries without ever mounting a horse, or suffering himself to be carried in a chariot or litter. His diet was such as chance presented. In his garb he little varied from a common soldier. Upon consultations and dispatches he bestowed whole nights and days. He never retired to his tent till he had visited the camp, and was always the first in the field when the usual exercises were to be performed. He was acquainted with all the old soldiers, remembered their exploits, and familiarly conversed with them; but at the same time he knew how to keep them to their duty. He was great in war, and equally great in peace. When he first assumed the sovereign power, he publicly professed, that he did not think himself, in that high station, more exempt from the observance of the laws, than the meanest of the people; and accordingly took an oath to obey them, which he religiously observed.

He delighted to see his people happy, and had nothing so much at heart as to make them so. To accomplish this purpose he cheerfully lessened his revenue, limited his authority, and restrained his prerogative, where it seemed in the least to interfere with the interest and happiness of his people.

Is adopted by Nerva.

Trajan an excellent commander.

His moderation, affability, generosity, and other virtues.

^m Dio, lib. lxxvii. p. 765. Spartian. p. 1, 2.

He was aware that overbearing pride was not the way to gain affection or esteem; and that condescension in a prince is not irreconcilable with his dignity: he therefore lived with his people rather like a father with his children, than a prince with his subjects". He advanced none but the most virtuous and worthy; and such as were otherwise, he reclaimed rather with gentleness and clemency, than with rigour and severity. On his accession to the empire, he declared in full senate, that no good man should ever be put to death by his orders; a declaration which he confirmed by a solemn oath, and religiously observed it. He suffered but few statues to be erected to him, discouraged flattery, and would not allow any extraordinary honours to be conferred upon him. His palace was constantly open to persons of all ranks, whom he received with extraordinary kindness, heard with great patience, and endeavoured, as far as possible, to dismiss none from his presence dissatisfied; looking upon himself to be raised to that high post, not for his own advantage, but for that of others. To the rest of his great qualities he added that of veracity, acting in council, in public negotiations, and with private men, without those little artifices which wise men despise, and none but the apes of wise men practise. He would never suffer any person to be condemned upon suspicion, however strong and well grounded, saying, it was better a thousand criminals should escape unpunished, than that one innocent person should be condemned°. When he appointed Suburranus captain of his guards, in presenting him, according to custom, with a drawn sword, the badge of his office, he used these memorable words; "Pro me; si merear, in me: employ this sword for me; but turn it, if I deserve it, against me".

*Allows his
freedmen
no power.*

He allowed none of his freedmen any share in the administration, telling them that he, and not they, was invested with the sovereign power, and therefore cautioning them not to assume any authority inconsistent with their rank (W). He is said to have excelled even Nerva himself in

* Plin. Panegy. Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 772, 773. Vict. in Epit.
° Plin. Panegy. Vict. Epit. Dio, p. 771. p Aur. Victor.

(W) Some persons having a strictest laws of justice; adding, suit with one of them, named "For neither is he Polycletus, Eurythmus, and seeming to nor I Nero." Polycletus, of dread the imperial freedman, whom we spoke in the reign of Trajan assured them, that the Nero, was that prince's favourite cause should be heard, discussed, freedman. and decided, according to the

generosity,

generosity, and all the preceding princes in the largesses with which he relieved, not only the citizens of Rome, but even the indigent people in all the provinces of the empire : whence he was by all nations looked upon as an affectionate father, and, as such, loved and revered. However, he was not without some failings : he was addicted to wine (X). Pliny extols his chastity ; but Dio owns, that he abandoned himself to the most infamous and unnatural practices ; and agrees therein both with Spartian^s, and the emperor Julian^s, who likewise charges him with laziness, for suffering Sura to write most of his letters. He loved gay amusements and diversions ; but from hence arose no neglect or relaxation in his conducting the public affairs. He was tinctured with ambition, and more desirous of extending the confines of the empire, than was consistent with justice. He suffered himself to be styled lord, as appears from Pliny's Epistles ; a title, which other good emperors, and Augustus himself, had constantly refused, and he seems at first to have declined^s. He likewise allowed sacrifices to be offered to his statues, and people to swear by his life and eternity, as most sacred things. We shall now pursue the history of his reign, according to the order of time.

His faults.

Trajan commanded a powerful army in Lower Germany, when he was adopted by Nerva, and declared his successor about the latter end of the year 97. He declined at first accepting that high post ; but was soon prevailed upon by the officers of his own army, and the deputies dispatched from the armies in Upper Germany, and in Mœsia, to assume the title of Cæsar. He did not seem in the least elated with his new dignity, choosing rather to be regarded by his soldiers as their general than their emperor. Nerva dying on the twenty-first or twenty-seventh of January of the following year, tidings of his death were first brought to him by Adrian his cousin. Trajan, who was then at

He accepts the title of Cæsar, and the empire.

^s Spart. in Adrian. p. 4, & 106.

^s Jul. Cæs. p. 12.

^s Plin. Panegy.

(X) This fault Dio Cassius owns ; but adds, that he never drank to excess (1). On the other hand, Aurelius Victor assures us, that he enjoined all his officers not to put in execution such orders as he should give at or after his banquets (2) ; and

Julian, surnamed the Apostate, writes, that Trajan had a talent for eloquence, and would have applied himself with success to that study, had he not, by immoderate drinking, impaired his natural capacity (3).

(1) Dio, p. 772. Cæs. p. 39.

(2) Aur. Vict. in Adrian. p. 2.

(3) Jul.

*The Barbarians
awed by
his presence.*

Cologne, immediately assumed the title of Augustus, and was acknowledged as such by the armies in Germany and Mœsia, who with great joy swore allegiance to him. He had no sooner taken possession of the empire, than he assured the senate upon his oath, that no man of probity should ever by his orders be either put to death, or injured in his fortune¹. He did not immediately leave Germany, but continued there all this, and part of the following year; for the time of his consulship was expired, as Pliny informs us², before he set out for Rome. All the German nations sent deputies to him, congratulating him upon his accession to the empire. The Barbarians, who dwelt beyond the Danube, and used, during the winter, to pass that river on the ice, and commit great devastations on the Roman territories, hearing that Trajan was created emperor, refrained from all hostilities, not daring to provoke so great a commander, now at liberty to chastize them without control.

*Trajan sets
out for
Rome.*

*How re-
ceived
there.*

The next consuls were Aulus Cornelius Palma and Caius Sosius Senecio, to whom Plutarch inscribed several of the lives he wrote, and some of his moral works. The senate had offered the consulate to Trajan; but, he declining it, though all the emperors, ever since the time of Claudius, had assumed that dignity the year after their accession to the empire, Palma and Senecio, his two chief favourites, were appointed in his room³. This year Trajan left Germany, and set out for Rome: his march proved no way burdensome to the provinces through which he passed, no man being injured either in his person or fortune by the emperor, or his numerous train. He caused the expence of his march, and that of Domitian when he went into Gaul, to be computed, and inserted in the public registers, that his successors might thence learn how to conduct themselves on the like occasion. He entered Rome on foot, and was received, by persons of all ranks, with the greatest demonstrations of joy imaginable, the people promising themselves complete happiness under so good and so great a prince. He tenderly embraced his old friends, who came to meet him; and would not be treated by them as their sovereign, but as a friend, assuring them, that such they should find him on all occasions. He went directly to the Capitol, attended by the senate, and the whole city, and thence to the palace.

The senate decreed the emperor, soon after his arrival, the title of Optimus; which he willingly accepted, and

¹ Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 771.

² Plin. Pan.

³ Ibid. p. 110—115.

seemed to value above all those which were afterwards conferred upon him on account of his victories¹. However, we do not find it in any inscription amongst his other titles till the year 110, the thirteenth of his reign². This year he paid part of the donative which he had promised, according to custom, to the soldiery; and made large distributions both of money and corn amongst the Roman people, extending his generosity to such as were absent, and even to children under the age of eleven, who had been hitherto excluded from any share in such largesses³. By means of these donations, which he frequently renewed, he is said to have supported near two millions of souls. He did not confine the effects of his good-will to Rome alone, but appointed very considerable sums to be paid yearly out of the treasury, for the maintenance of children, whom their indigent parents could not, without great difficulty, bring up and support. He took great care, that Rome should be supplied with plenty of provisions, especially with corn, which, during the whole time of his reign, was sold at a very moderate price: he exhibited several shews, and a combat of gladiators, to satisfy the populace, fond of such diversions; but drove out of Rome the players, who had been banished by Domitian, but, at the request of the people, recalled by Nerva. He enacted several laws against informers, and confined to the islands such of that vile tribe as had been spared by Nerva, utterly abolishing the sanguinary law of majesty. He repaired, at a great charge, several old buildings, and enlarged the circus; but would not suffer the people to return him thanks for his public works; he even issued an edict, forbidding his name to be mentioned either in the circus or the theatre, which, till then, resounded, says Pliny, with the praises of wicked princes⁴. All these circumstances are related by Pliny as happening in the second year of Trajan's reign, before the time appointed for the election of consuls. The people had, it seems, recovered their ancient privilege of creating magistrates; for Trajan, whom the senate had pressed to accept a third consulship, appeared amongst the other candidates, soliciting, like a private citizen, the suffrages of the tribes⁵. He chose for his colleague Fronto, according to some; Frontinus, according to others; for both M. Julius Fronto, and Sextus Julius Frontinus, who wrote a treatise on aqueducts, lived at this time. In the same assembly,

The title of Optimus decreed to the emperor.

His largesses.

Is an enemy to informers.

His modesty.

¹ Dio, p. 781. ² Vide Fabretti de Column. Trajan. cap. 9.
³ Birag. p. 149. Spart. p. 16. ⁴ Plin. Pan. p. 74. & lib. x. epist.
⁵ Dio in Excerpt. Val. p. 709. ⁶ Plin. Pan. p. 120—134.

formidable, and their king maintained a good understanding with Pacorus king of the Parthians; a connection which gave Trajan no small jealousy. When he, therefore, heard, that the Dacians had passed the Danube, and committed hostilities, he was glad of that pretence to make war upon, and humble an enemy, whose power he began to fear. He immediately assembled a formidable army, marched with incredible expedition to the banks of the Danube, passed that river without opposition, Decebalus not being apprised of his arrival, and entered Dacia, committing every-where dreadful devastations. Decebalus, however, was not in the least dismayed; he armed the youth of the country, and boldly advanced to meet the Romans, encamping at a small distance from their entrenchments. Trajan immediately drew out his men, in order to offer the enemy battle. As he approached the place where they lay, a large mushroom was found, and brought to him, with the following words in Latin cut upon it: "Your allies, especially the Byrrhi, advise you to conclude a peace with the Dacians, and to retire." Trajan, despising that advice, continued advancing in order of battle, till he discovered Decebalus, at the head of a powerful army, coming full march to meet him. He then halted, and having encouraged his men in a short speech, ordered the trumpets to sound the charge. All we know of this action is, that great numbers of the enemy fell, and that the Romans gained the victory; which, however, cost them dear, the wounded on their side being very numerous. Linen being wanted to bind up their wounds, Trajan tore his own robes, to supply that want. Such as fell in battle he caused to be interred with great solemnity; and ordered an altar to be built on the spot, and sacrifices to be yearly offered in honour of the deceased. He followed the enemy close; and, without giving them time to levy new forces, harassed them to such a degree, that Decebalus, reduced almost to despair, sent some of his chief lords with proposals of peace. The emperor appointed Licinius Sura, and Claudius Libianus, captain of the prætorian guards, to treat with them; but, the deputies not agreeing, Trajan continued his ravages, advancing from one hill to another, not without great danger, till he arrived in the neighbourhood of Zermizegethusa, the metropolis of Dacia. On the other side, Maximus, one of the Roman generals, made himself master of several strong fortresses, in one of which he took the sister of Decebalus

The Dacians defeated.

Trajan's humanity to the wounded.

Decebalus king of the Dacians seeks for peace.

prisoner, and recovered a Roman standard, which had been lost when Fuscus was defeated and killed in the reign of Domitian.

At length Decebalus, no longer able to withstand the Romans, and dreading the destruction of his capital, which would be attended with the loss of his whole kingdom, dispatched other ambassadors to Trajan, offering to accept such conditions as he should think fit to impose. Accordingly Trajan granted him a peace upon the following terms:

1. That he should surrender the territories which he had unjustly taken from the neighbouring nations. 2. That he should deliver up his arms, his warlike engines, and the artificers who made them, with all the Roman deserters. 3. That, for the future, he should entertain no deserters, nor take into his service the natives of any country subject to Rome. 4. That he should dismantle all his fortresses and castles. And, lastly, that he should have the same friends and foes with the people of Rome. With these articles Decebalus reluctantly complied; and, having sworn to observe them, he was introduced to Trajan, before whom he threw himself on the ground, acknowledging himself his vassal. Trajan commanded him to send deputies to the senate, for the ratification of the peace; which he obtained accordingly. The war being thus ended, Trajan, having placed garrisons in most of the cities of Dacia, returned to Rome; which he entered in triumph, and took the surname of Dacicus, being the first Roman who had ever triumphed over that nation^f.

which is granted him upon hard terms.

Trajan the first who triumphed over the Dacians.

In the following year Suranus, of whom we find no farther mention in history, and L. Licinius Sura, or, as some style him, Suras, were chosen consuls. Sura was Trajan's chief favourite, and had employed all his interest with Nerva in his behalf; whence to him chiefly, after Nerva, Trajan acknowledged himself indebted for his adoption and preferment^g. This year Trajan, at the request of the senate, and at the motion of Nigrinus, tribune of the people, subjected such pleaders, as received fees from their clients, to the penalties of the law against extortion: and Licinius Nepos, prætor, upon his taking possession of that office, procured a decree from the senate, commanding the parties, before their cause began to be tried, to swear, that they had neither given nor promised any fee, present, or reward, to those who were to plead in their behalf. Pliny commends this law, and declares, that he was pleased to see

Licinius Sura the emperor's chief favourite.

Pleaders forbidden to receive fees.

^f Dio, p. 710. Sprat. in Adrian. Goltz. p. 646. Euseb. in Chron. p. 341. ^g Viçt. in Epit.

that forbidden to others, which he had never practised himself^h. Towards the end of the year, Trajan assumed twice the title of emperor, for victories which were gained by some of his lieutenants (for he himself continued the whole year at Rome), but are not mentioned by any historian.

The port of Centum-cellæ.

Pliny appointed governor of Pontus and Bithynia.

The next consuls were Trajan the fifth time, and Lucius Appius Maximus, who had signalized himself in the Dacian war. At this period the emperor began a magnificent and convenient harbour at Centumcellæ, now Civita Vecchia, which he called, after his own name, the Harbour of Trajan. Pliny was this year appointed to govern Pontus and Bithynia, in quality of lieutenant and proprætor, with consular authority; that is, he was not appointed governor of that province by the senate, but by the emperor, though the province of Pontus and Bithynia belonged to the senate. As there were many abuses in that province to reform, the emperor sent Pliny thither, with an extraordinary authority, as his lieutenant; but afterwards allowed the senate to appoint the governors as formerly, Adrian being the first who took the province of Pontus and Bithynia from the senate, and gave them Pamphylia in exchangeⁱ.

Yr. of Fl.
2453.
A. D. 105.
U. C. 853.

Decebalus violates the articles of the treaty.

His treachery.

L. Licinius Sura and M. Marcellus being consuls, Sauromates, king of Bosporus, sent a solemn embassy to Trajan, and entered into an alliance with him and the Roman people. Soon after Decebalus, king of the Dacians, unable to live in subjection, began, contrary to the late treaty, to raise men, provide arms, entertain deserters, fortify his castles, and invite the neighbouring nations to join him against the Romans as a common enemy. The Scythians were gained by his solicitations; but the Iazyges refusing to bear arms against Rome, he invaded their country, and seized that part of it which bordered on the Danube. In consequence of these hostilities, Decebalus was by the senate declared an enemy; and Trajan marched against him in person. Decebalus, not finding himself in a condition to withstand him by open force, had recourse to deceit and treachery, sending assassins, under the name of deserters, to murder him; but one of these, being apprehended upon suspicion, and put to the torture, discovered the whole plot, together with his accomplices, who were immediately seized and executed. Decebalus, failing in this attempt, invited Longinus, one of Trajan's favourites and chief commanders, to a conference, offering to put an end to the

^h Plin. lib. v. Epist. 14. lib. vi. epist. 31.
Valef. p. 714.

ⁱ Dio in Excerpt,

war, by submitting to the articles of the former treaty, with some small alteration. Longinus, not suspecting any treachery, complied with the invitation : but Decebalus immediately seized him ; and, after having attempted in vain to make him reveal the designs of the emperor, he wrote to Trajan, offering to release Longinus, upon condition that he would grant him an honourable peace, restore the country bordering on the Danube, and defray all the charges of the war ; adding, that, if these conditions were not complied with, he would instantly put Longinus to death. Trajan returned him a judicious answer, neither seeming to undervalue the life of his favourite, nor yet to estimate it so highly, as to purchase it at too dear a rate. But while Decebalus was deliberating about the measures he should pursue, Longinus, by a dose of poison, which was privately conveyed to him by a freedman, deprived himself of life. Decebalus immediately dispatched a centurion taken with Longinus, offering Trajan the body of the deceased general, with ten captives, provided he would deliver up the freedman whom Longinus had sent, before he took the poison, to the emperor, under colour of negotiating a treaty ; but Trajan would neither hear the proposal, nor even suffer the centurion to return.

In the mean time Trajan, that his troops might with more ease pass the Danube, built a bridge over that spacious river, which, by the ancients, is styled the most magnificent and wonderful of all his works, and the most stately fabric of that nature in the universe. It was composed of square stone, and contained twenty arches, each of them one hundred and fifty feet above the foundation, and sixty feet in breadth, all distant from each other one hundred and seventy feet. It was built where the river was narrowest, and consequently where the stream was strongest and most rapid ; a circumstance which renders the fabric still more stupendous and amazing, on account of the almost insurmountable difficulties they must have encountered in laying so large a foundation^k. The architect employed on this occasion was Apollodorus of Damascus, who left a description of this great work^l. Trajan ordered two castles to be built, to guard the bridge, one on the Roman, the other on the Dacian side of the river. This stupendous fabric was begun and ended in one summer ; but Trajan, not thinking it adviseable to enter Dacia upon the approach of winter, contented himself with making the necessary pre-

*Trajan
builds a
bridge
over the
Danube.*

^k Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 776.
lib. iv. cap. 6.

^l Procop. de *Ædificiis Justin.*

parations for vigorously attacking the enemy early in the spring.

*Trajan
marches
against the
Dacians.*

*Exposes
himself to
great dan-
gers.*

Yr. of Fl.
2454.
A. D. 106.
U. C. 854.

*Makes
himself
master of
the capital
of Dacia,
which is
reduced to
a Roman
province.*

In the mean time the following consuls were chosen at Rome, Tiberius Julius Candidus, and Aulus Julius Quadratus, both for the second time. This year, the eighth of Trajan's reign, a dreadful earthquake overturned in Asia the cities of Elea, Myrine, Pitame, and Cumæ; and in Greece the cities of Opus and Oritæ^m. Adrian discharged for a time the office of tribune of the people, and then went to attend Trajan in the war against the Dacians. The emperor early in the spring passed the Danube on the bridge he had built, and, entering the enemy's country, pursued the war with more prudence than expedition, unwilling to expose his men to unnecessary dangersⁿ. He often encamped on steep and barren mountains^o; was obliged to divert rivers into new channels, and to attempt and perform things, which, were they not well attested, would seem altogether fabulous. He gave many signal instances of his personal courage; and the soldiers, animated by his example, cheerfully underwent all the hardships of laborious warfare. At length Trajan made himself master of the capital of Dacia, and almost of the whole country; insomuch that Decebalus, seeing himself stripped of his dominions, and dreading to fall into the hands of the conqueror, chose rather to put an end to his life, than to live in subjection, or acknowledge himself vanquished. His head was immediately brought to Trajan, and by him sent to Rome. He had concealed his treasures in a deep pit, which he caused to be dug in the bed of the river Sargetia, now Istrig, having for that purpose turned the stream into another channel, and afterwards brought it to its former course. He secured his rich moveables in deep caves, which he caused to be dug by captives, whom he immediately after put to death, that they might not discover the secret; but Bacilis, one of his chief favourites and confidants, being taken in this war, discovered the whole to Trajan, who seized both the treasure, and valuable moveables, of the deceased prince^p (Z). Dacia being

^m Euseb. Chron.
epist. 9.

ⁿ Dio, p. 776.
^p Dio, lib. lxi. p. 787.

^o Plin. lib. viii.

(Z) We are told, that, notwithstanding this discovery, great riches were found in those places many ages after, which had escaped Trajan. The famous column of Trajan is thought to have been raised for

a lasting monument of the victories gained by that prince over the Dacians: at least, many of the remarkable events of this war are expressed in the basso relievo of that pillar.

entirely

entirely subdued, Trajan reduced it to a Roman province, which was, according to Eutropius ^q, a thousand miles in compass. The Romans held it to the reign of the emperor Gallienus ^r; during which time it was governed by a magistrate, with the title of proprætor. Trajan built several castles in the country, and placed garrisons in them, to keep the inhabitants in subjection ^s. He likewise planted a great number of colonies, distributing lands among the poor citizens of Rome, and of the other towns of Italy, who were willing to settle in Dacia (A).

Many colonies planted in Dacia.

Trajan, upon his return to Rome, triumphed over the Dacians a second time; caused several medals to be struck in memory of his victories, many of which are still preserved ^t; entertained the people with public banquets; with shews, in which ten thousand gladiators entered the lists; with combats of wild beasts, of which above ten thousand were killed; and all kinds of diversions, which lasted one hundred and twenty-three days ^u. The same year is remarkable for the entire reduction of Arabia Petræa by Aulus Cornelius Palma, governor of Syria, after it had been long governed by its own kings. Trajan reduced, together with the Dacians, several nations in alliance with them; so that the fame of his conquests reaching the most distant countries, and even India, ambassadors were sent from thence to congratulate him upon the success which had attended his arms.

Trajan's second triumph over the Dacians.

Arabia Petræa entirely reduced.

The next consuls were Cerealis and L. Ceionius Commodus Verus, the father of L. Ælius Verus, as is commonly supposed, who was created Cæsar by Adrian. During their

^q Eutrop. p. 236.

^r Ruf. p. 550.

^s Gruter. p. 354.

^t Oeco, p. 201.

^u Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 777.

(A) The Hungarian writers mention several cities in their country, which were, on this occasion, built or peopled by the Romans; but the most celebrated of all was Zermizegeshusa, which, in several ancient inscriptions, is styled Colonia Ulpia Trajana Augusta Dacia Sarmiz. It was established by M. Scaurianus proprætor of Dacia, and continued subject to the Romans at least to the death of the emperor Severus. At present it is but a poor village in Transylvania, known

by the name of Gradisfch. In Mœsia and Thrace several cities borrowed their names from Trajan; for we find the city of Trajanopolis in Thrace mentioned by the ancients; that of Ulpia in Upper Mœsia, now Servia; the cities of Plotinopolis, which, no doubt, was so called from Plotina, Trajan's wife; and Marcianopolis, the capital of Lower Mœsia, which took its name from Marciana, the emperor's sister, and was, according to Jornandes, built by Trajan.

adminif-

administration, the Capitoline sports, established by Domitian, were exhibited the sixth time, when the prize in poetry was obtained by a child thirteen years old, named L. Valerius Pudens ^v. This year Trajan carried, at a vast charge, a road through the Palus Pontina, or Pontine Marthes, the remains of which are still visible ^z; and this, no doubt, is the Via Trajana, or Trajan's Highway, mentioned in several ancient inscriptions produced by Occo and Gruter ^y. Dio Cassius adds, that he ordered all the diminished coin to be melted down, and mentions several magnificent buildings, with which he embellished Rome: but of these we shall speak hereafter; for Trajan must have only begun them this year, since he left Rome in the month of October, and was at Antioch the beginning of the ensuing year. However, before he departed for the East, a conspiracy was formed against him by Crassus, and several other persons of the first quality; but seasonably discovered. The conspirators were tried, not by him (for he declined being judge), but by the senate, who condemned them to banishment.

A conspiracy against Trajan.

His moderation on that occasion.

Designs to make war upon the Parthians;

and sets out for the East.

The true motive of Trajan's journey into the East was a desire of glory, which he hoped to reap from a war with the Parthians, who rivalled the Romans themselves in power, and had several times defeated their armies with great slaughter. The pretence he alleged for quarrelling with that nation, was, that Exedares, king of Armenia, had received his crown from the king of Parthia; whereas the Roman emperors claimed a right of disposing of that crown ever since the reign of Nero, who, in the year sixty-sixth, the twelfth of his empire, had crowned at Rome Tindates king of Armenia. Trajan, who eagerly wanted to make war upon the Parthians, pretended to be highly affronted at the Parthian king's giving the crown and royal ensigns to Exedares, and threatened him with war, if he refused to comply with his just demands. Cosroes despising his menaces; Trajan, who had already made the necessary preparations for this expedition, immediately left Rome, and crossed over into Greece. When Cosroes found he was determined, he began to abate of his pride, and sent deputies to him with rich presents, beseeching that he would not, upon such slight motives, engage the two empires in a bloody and destructive war: at the same time he acquainted him, that Exedares, finding himself neither acceptable to the Romans, nor to the Parthians, had abdi-

^v Onuph. in Fast. p. 216.
^y Grut. p. 199.

^z Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 777.

cated the crown, and besought Trajan to dispose of it in favour of Parthamasiris. The ambassadors found Trajan at Athens, and delivered their message; to which the emperor replied, that friendship was shewn by actions, and not by words; that he was going into Syria, and that there he should take such resolutions as he should think proper. He then dismissed the ambassadors, without accepting any of their presents². He pursued his journey through Asia Minor, Cilicia, and the other provinces, to Seleucia in Syria, and from thence to Antioch, the capital of that province, which he entered, crowned with a branch of olive³.

Ambassadors sent to him by the king of the Parthians.

He arrives at Antioch.

The following year's consuls were Lucius Licinius Sura the third time, and Caius Socius Senecio the second, who resigned the fasces to Suranus and Servianus. During Adrian's residence in Antioch, Abgarus, or, as some call him, Augarus, prince of Edessa in Mesopotamia, sent him presents, and declared a sincere desire of living in friendship with him and the people of Rome; but as he equally feared the Romans and Parthians, and was desirous to please both, he declined waiting upon him in person. The other petty princes in that neighbourhood came personally to offer their service to the emperor, and brought with them, according to the custom of the eastern countries, rich presents (B). Trajan received all the princes, who came to attend him, with great demonstrations of kindness, accepted their gifts, and pretended to repose an entire confidence in them. Having made the necessary preparations for his intended expedition, he left Antioch, bending his march towards Armenia, when Parthamasiris, who had written to him before, and styled him king of Armenia, sent him a second letter (for Trajan had returned no answer to the first), wherein he omitted the title of king, and desired, that M. Junius, governor of Cappadocia, might be appointed to treat with him. Trajan sent only the son of Junius, and, in the mean time, pursued his march, making himself master of several places, without the least resistance. At Sata, or rather Satala, a city in Armenia Minor, the emperor was met by Anquialus king of the Heniochi, a people of Circassia on the Euxine Sea, and of the Maheloni, of whom we find no farther mention in history. Trajan received him

Abgarus king of Edessa, and other princes, send presents to Trajan.

The king of Armenia writes to the emperor,

who seizes several places in that kingdom.

² Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 778.
Lond. ann. 1647.

³ Usser. Not. in Act. Ignat. p. 35.

(B) One among the rest presented him with a stately courser, which, as he was brought before the emperor, kneeled down, bowed his head to the ground, and adored him, as he had been taught for that purpose.

with

with all possible demonstrations of kindness, and made him rich presents, in order to attach him to his interest.

The king of Armenia waits upon him in person.

Upon his arrival at Elegia, in the Greater Armenia, Parthamasiris came to wait upon him, and solicit the crown of Armenia. Trajan received him seated upon a throne or tribunal, and attended by the chief officers of his army. As Parthamasiris approached, he took off his crown, and laid it at the emperor's feet, without uttering a single word, not doubting but he would immediately return it to him. In the mean time the soldiers, elated to see the king of Armenia, though supported by the whole power of the Parthian empire, obliged to submit, and resign his crown to their general, congratulated him upon it with loud shouts; which so terrified Parthamasiris, that he attempted to withdraw, but finding himself surrounded on all sides, he desired to speak to Trajan in private. He was accordingly carried into the emperor's tent; but Trajan, disliking his proposals, and refusing to comply with them, he left the tent in a rage, and endeavoured to make his escape out of the camp. But Trajan having ordered him to be brought back, again ascended the tribunal, and desired the prince to repeat, in the hearing of all, the proposals he had made in private, and his answers, that persons who were ignorant of what had passed between them, might not give false accounts of the conference, and misrepresent it to the world. Parthamasiris, no longer able to contain himself, told Trajan, that he had neither been conquered nor taken prisoner; that he came voluntarily, believing no injury would have been offered him, and that he should receive his kingdom of Trajan as Tiridates had done of Nero.

Trajan refuses him the crown of Armenia.

Trajan replied, that Armenia belonged to the Romans, and that it should receive a Roman governor, and be no longer a kingdom; that, as for Parthamasiris, he gave him liberty to retire whither he pleased. Accordingly he dismissed him, and the Parthians who attended him, and appointed a guard, that they might not be insulted by the soldiery, or raise disturbances; he detained the Armenians as subjects of the Roman empire, and ordered them to return to their respective dwellings. Parthamasiris endeavoured to maintain himself in his kingdom by force of arms; but lost his life in the attempt; so that Trajan made himself master of Armenia, which he reduced to a Roman province^b.

Armenia reduced to a Roman province.

Upon the reduction of Armenia several princes submitted to Trajan; amongst whom are mentioned the kings of Ibe-

^b Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 779. Arrian. in Perip. Pont. Euxin. p. 7. Eutrop. in Vit. Trajan.

Ha, Sarmatia, Bosphorus, and Colchis^c. He appointed a king to rule over the Albanians, and bestowed that dignity on Julianus, prince of the Apfiles, whose country bordered on the Euxine Sea, having for its metropolis the city of Dioscuris, afterwards called Sebastopolis. The emperor having left garrisons in all the fortresses of Armenia, advanced to the city of Edessa in Mesopotamia, where he was treated in a very friendly manner by Abgarus, king of that district. Abgarus had before sent him several presents; but put off, under various pretences, waiting upon him in person. However, Trajan, by the mediation of Abgarus's son, Arbandes, a very comely youth, received his excuses, and admitted him to his friendship. Abgarus made a grand entertainment for the emperor and the chief officers of his army, at which Arbandes, who was perhaps too much beloved by Trajan, diverted him with dancing after the manner of his country^d. Manes, the chief of one of the Arabian nations, Sporaces, prince of Anthemusia, a province of Mesopotamia, Mebarsapes, king of Adiabene, and Manifares, prince of some district in that neighbourhood, declared, that they were ready to join Trajan; but, in the mean time, delayed meeting him: so that the emperor began to distrust them, especially after the treachery of Mebarsapes, who having demanded and obtained a body of troops to protect his dominions, as he pretended, against the Parthians, put most of them to the sword, and held the rest in captivity. Amongst the latter was a centurion, named Sentius, who, as Trajan, highly provoked at this treachery, approached a place of great strength, called Ademystres, where he was confined, found means to break his chains, and, with the assistance of his fellow-captives, killed the governor of the fort, and opened the gates to the Romans. Trajan, now master of so strong and important a place, advanced boldly into Mesopotamia, and reduced great part of it by the terror of his name.

Yr. of Fl.
2456.
A. D. 108.
U. C. 856.

*Several
kings sub-
mit to Tra-
jan.
Enters Me-
sopotamia.*

*The trea-
chery of
the king of
Adiabene.*

*Trajan
builds a
bridge over
the Tigris.*

As the greatest part of Adiabene lay beyond the Tigris, Trajan built a bridge over that river, which is represented on several medals that have reached our times^e. The cities of Nisibe and Batue made a vigorous defence; but in the end were obliged to submit. We know not what measures Cosrohes took, or what attempts he made, to stop Trajan's conquests (C). Lufius Quietus distinguished himself

^c Eutrop. in Vit. Trajan.
^e p. 205. Birag. 157.

^d Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 780.

^e Occo;

(C) We should be able to transactions, if the Parthian give a better account of these history, composed by Arrian, Vol. XIII. S who

*Lulus Qui-
etus distin-
guishes
himself in
this and
Trajan's
other wars.*

self above all the commanders employed by Trajan in this war. He was an African, and born in a country not subject to Rome; but nevertheless served in the Roman cavalry, till he was degraded and dismissed for some misdemeanour, either by Domitian or Nerva. Trajan wanting Moors in his wars with the Dacians, took this prince again into the service, with a body of his countrymen and dependents, at the head of whom he performed wonders, both in the first and second Dacian war^f. In the Parthian war he served with such courage and success, that Trajan honoured him with the consulate, and, towards the end of his reign, appointed him governor of Palestine, in reward for a signal victory which he gained over the Jews of Mesopotamia^g. His reducing the Mardi, a people of Asia, near Armenia, and not far from the Caspian Sea, is mentioned as what most eminently contributed to his glory and preferment. Ammianus Marcellinus extols him as one of the greatest captains that ever bore arms for the Romans^h. We are told, that Trajan had such a friendship and esteem for him, that he entertained thoughts of naming him for his successor, though he was not even born a subject of the empire. In the next six years we find nothing recorded by the compilers of the ancients, except the names of the consuls, the highway made by Trajan from Beneventum to Brundisium, the burning of the pantheon by lightning, the

^f Dio, in Excerpt. Vales. p. 710. lib. lxxviii. p. 773. Spart. in Aur. Themist. orat. xvi. ^g Euseb. lib. iv. cap. 1. ^h Ammian. lib. xxix.

who flourished at this time, on purpose to display the exploits of Trajan, and by him divided into seventeen books, had reached us (1): but that work being long since lost, and many other histories of these times (for under no prince there flourished a greater number of celebrated historians than under Trajan) we are with no prince's achievements less acquainted than with Trajan's. Not to mention the many writers who have described the Parthian war, in which Trajan distinguished himself in a very emi-

nent manner, both as a soldier and a general, Marius Maximus, Fabius Marcellinus, Aurelius Verus, Statius Vales, Ammianus Marcellinus, and Dio Cassius, wrote his life, either by itself, or in the body of the Roman history. But none of the works of these authors are now remaining; so that we are obliged to recur to the Abridgment of Dio Cassius by Xiphilin, and to the still more compendious and undigested writings of Aurelius Victor and Eutropius.

(1) Phot. cap. 15.

destruction of some cities in Galatia by an earthquake, and dedication of the great square at Rome; which took its name from Trajan. The consuls were Appius Annii Trebonianus Gallus, and Marcus Attilius Metellus Bradua; Aulus Cornelius Palma the second time, and L. Tullus; Priscinus, or Priscianus, and Orfitus; Caius Calpurnius Piso, and M. Vettius Bolanus; Trajan the sixth time, and Titus Sextius Bolanus; Lucius Publius Celsus the second time, and Caius Clodius Crispinus; Quintus Ninnius Hosta, and Publius Manilius Vopiscus. These were consuls from the eleventh to the seventeenth year of Trajan's reign inclusively; that is, from the 108th to the 114th of the Christian æra.

The eighteenth year of Trajan's reign, and 115th of the Christian æra, was remarkable for the victories gained by that great commander over the Parthians, and for which he assumed the title of emperor the seventh, eighth, and ninth times¹. Whatever gave occasion to hostilities (for history is silent upon this head), Trajan, before he left Syria, sent, at the request of his friends, to enquire of the oracle of Heliopolis in Phœnicia, whether he should return from this war to Rome. The oracle replied, as usual, in ambiguous terms, which might be interpreted either way. Trajan, putting the most favourable construction upon these mysterious words, early in the spring left Syria, and marched against the Parthians encamped on the other side of the Tigris. As the river was not fordable, and the enemy possessed, with a numerous army, the opposite bank, he caused a great number of boats to be privately built in the woods of Nisibis, which being conveyed upon carriages to the shore, a bridge was suddenly formed over the river, which Trajan passed in spite of the utmost efforts of the enemy, who greatly annoyed him with showers of arrows, till he sent several boats against them, manned with archers and slingers, and ordered others to move up and down the river, as if they were attempting to land in other places. This disposition so distracted the Parthians, already discouraged and surprised at the sight of so many vessels in a country almost destitute of wood, that they fled, and suffered the Roman army to pass the river without farther molestation. Trajan conquered the kingdom of Adiabene, which he had reduced in the former war, but perhaps restored upon the conclusion of the peace. He likewise subdued the country which at that time still retained the name of Assyria, and in which stood the city of Ninos or Nineve, and Arbela and Gau-

*He consults
the oracle
of Heliopolis.*

*He passes
the Tigris
on a bridge
of boats.*

*Reduces
Assyria,*

¹ Gruter. p. 218. Goltz. p. 65, 66.

gamela, two places famous in history, on account of the victories of Alexander the Great.

*and arrives at
Babylon.
Yr. of Fl.
2463.
A. D. 115.
U. C. 863.*

*He begins
a canal
between
the Eu-
phrates and
the Tigris;
but drops
that under-
taking.*

*Makes
himself
master of
Seleucia
and Ctesiphon,
the metropolis
of the Par-
thian em-
pire.*

As the Parthians were greatly weakened by domestic wars, and still divided among themselves, Trajan advanced to the celebrated city of Babylon, of the power and greatness of which we have read such wonders. He entered it without opposition, and reduced its large territory, where the Roman standards had never before been displayed. By this acquisition he became master of those rich and noble countries, Assyria and Chaldæa. There he was attracted by curiosity to visit their lake of bitumen, which was made use of in building the famous walls of Babylon. Afterwards he began a canal between the Euphrates and the Tigris, in order to convey his vessels out of the former into the latter, and with them lay a bridge over the Tigris, being resolved to besiege Ctesiphon, situated on that river: but being informed that the bed of the Euphrates was much higher than that of the Tigris, he abandoned the design, fearing the stream would become too rapid, and consequently not navigable^k. However, Ammianus Marcellinus assures us, that the emperor Julian, having removed the stones with which the mouth of the canal was stopped, conveyed his vessels through that cut from the Euphrates into the Tigris, a little above Ctesiphon^l. This canal was called Naarmalca, that is, the River of Kings. Trajan, dreading the above mentioned inconvenience, did not think it advisable to make use of the canal. He ordered his vessels to be transported upon land-carriages from the Euphrates to the Tigris, these two rivers being, in some places, at a small distance from each other; and having formed a bridge with them, passed his army over the Tigris, and made himself master of Seleucia, and likewise of the great city of Ctesiphon, the metropolis of the Parthian, and afterwards of the Persian empire^m. Upon his entering that city he was proclaimed emperor by the army, who with loud acclamations confirmed the title of Parthicus, which he had first gained by the reduction of Nisibis. At Ctesiphon he took the daughter of Cosroes prisoner, and seized the throne of the Parthian kings, which was of massy goldⁿ. Cosroes himself made his escape, and was living in the reign of Adrian. Trajan having acquainted the senate with the success that had attended him in this expedition, a decree passed, allowing the conqueror of the Parthians to enter Rome in triumph as often as he pleased^o. The reduction

^k Dio, p. 784.
jan.

^l Ammian. lib. xxiv.

ⁿ Spart. in Adr.

^o Dio, *ibid.*

^m Eutrop. in Tra-

of Ctesiphon put him in possession of all the neighbouring countries. Eutropius relates, that he reduced the Marcumades, the Cardueni, Anthemisia, a large province of Persia, says that writer, and all the countries lying between Babylon and India. *Reduces several countries.*

At Babylon he visited the house in which Alexander the Great died, and performed some ceremonies in honour of that famous conqueror^p. Ammianus Marcellinus writes, that in his time Trajan's tribunal was still standing at a city in the neighbourhood of Babylon, which he calls Ozogardene^q. Trajan reduced Armenia, Mesopotamia, and Assyria, to the condition of Roman provinces; so that the empire now extended even beyond the Tigris. How he disposed of the country of the Parthians, we shall relate hereafter. Towards the end of autumn, Trajan returned to Antioch, which was that winter almost entirely ruined by one of the most dreadful earthquakes mentioned in history (D). *Assyria made a Roman province.*

The

^p Ammian. lib. xxiv. p. 263.

^q Eutrop. ibid.

(D) That city was then crowded with troops, and strangers assembled from all quarters, either out of curiosity, or upon business and embassies; so that there was scarce a nation or province but what shared in the calamity; and all the Roman world, says Dio Cassius, suffered in one city. The earthquake was preceded by violent claps of thunder, unusual winds, and a dreadful noise under-ground: then followed so terrible a shock, that the earth seemed in the most horrid convulsions, several houses were overturned, and others tossed to and fro like a ship at sea: the noise of the cracking and bursting of the timber, of the falling of the houses, and a dismal and tremendous roaring, drowned the cries of the affrighted people. Those who happened to be in their houses, were, for the most part, buried under their ruins; such as were walking in the streets,

and in the squares, were by the violence of the shock dashed against one another, and most of them either killed, or dangerously wounded. As the earthquake continued, with some small intermission, for several days and nights successively, thousands perished by it, and, among the rest, the consul Marcus Peto Vergilianus, with many persons of great distinction. The most violent shock happened, as we read in the acts of St. Ignatius, on a Sunday, the twenty-third of December. Trajan himself was much hurt, but nevertheless escaped through a window of the house where he was. Dio Cassius pretends, that he was taken out, and carried away, by one who, in tallness, exceeded the human size. The same writer adds, that Mount Lison, which stood at a small distance from Antioch, bowed with its top, and threatened to fall upon the

*The port of
Ancona.*

*Trajan
sails down
the Tigris
into the
Persian
gulf.*

*He reduces
Arabia
Felix.*

The next consuls were L. Ælius Lamia and Ælianus Verus. From an inscription of this year, the nineteenth of Trajan's reign, we learn, that the senate and people of Rome returned the emperor solemn thanks for having facilitated the entry into Italy on the side of the Adriatic sea, by a port made by his order at Ancona. Upon the return of the spring, Trajan, leaving Antioch, visited the conquered countries; and finding them all in a state of tranquillity, he embarked on board his fleet, and sailed down the Tigris, being desirous to view the Persian gulf. The storms, the rapidity of the river, and the tides, rendered his navigation both troublesome and dangerous. However, he made himself master of Mesene, an island formed by the Tigris, and obliged Athambylus, who reigned there, to pay him tribute. He was hospitably received by the inhabitants of Charax Spasinæ, the metropolis of Athambylus's dominions, which most geographers place at the mouth of the Tigris. It was, we conjecture, on this occasion, that he reduced Arabia Felix. Trajan, having reached the ocean, as we read in Dio Cassius, and finding a ship bound to India, wished he was young, that he might, like Alexander, extend his conquests to that country^r. Eutropius tells us, that he had a fleet ready equipped in the Red Sea, with a design to invade India; that he informed himself of the customs, strength, and manner of fighting, of the Indians; and that he envied the happiness of Alexander, who had subdued them, and extended his conquests far beyond the bounds of the Roman empire.

Trajan wrote to the senate, acquainting them with the success of his arms, and the names of the several nations which he had conquered. They decreed him extraordinary honours; among the rest that he should, upon his return

^r Dio, p. 784.

city; that other mountains fell; that new rivers appeared; and others, that had flowed before, forsook their course, and vanished. When the earthquake ceased, the voice of a woman was heard crying under the ruins; which being removed, she was found with a sucking child in her arms, whom she had kept alive, as well as her-

self, with her milk. Search was made for others; but no one besides was found alive, except a child that was still suckling its dead mother (1). This dreadful earthquake is mentioned by Eusebius, Aurelius Victor, and Evagrius, who all speak of it as the greatest calamity recorded in history (2).

(1) Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 781. Ignat. Acta, p. 53, 54. (2) Euseb. Chron. p. 208. & lib. i. cap. 12.

to Rome, triumph over each particular nation which he had subdued: a triumphal arch was built in his own forum, to perpetuate the memory of his conquests; and the people of Rome made preparations to receive him with the utmost pomp upon his return. But he never returned to Rome; nor was the end of his actions answerable to the beginning. For most of the nations, which he had conquered, revolted and shook off the yoke, after having driven out or massacred the garrisons that had been left amongst them. The Jews, who had been dispersed into all parts of the world, raised a dreadful rebellion in all the provinces of the empire, encouraged by the absence of the emperor, and the late terrible earthquake, which, as they imagined, portended the ruin and downfall of the Roman empire. The example of the Jews was followed by most of the countries which Trajan had conquered, the inhabitants rising every-where up in arms, and murdering, or expelling the Roman garrisons. Against them the emperor dispatched Lufius Quietus, and L. Appius Maximus, who were attended with very different success; for Maximus was defeated and killed; by whom history does not inform us: but Lufius distinguished himself as usual, gained great advantages over the enemy, recovered the city of Nisibis, besieged, stormed, and laid in ashes, the city of Edeffa. On the other hand, Erucius Clarus, and Julius Alexander, two other commanders of the emperor, retook the city of Seleucia upon the Tigris, and several others, which had shaken off the yoke. Lufius was, for his gallant conduct, rewarded with the government of Palæstine*, no doubt, to keep that province in awe, which was chiefly inhabited by Jews, and seemed inclined, as Spartian informs us†, to revolt, and raise new commotions in the empire. For these advantages, and the recovery of his conquests, Trajan assumed the tenth and last time the title of emperor. During these disturbances, Sambelus, king of Mefene, continued faithful to Trajan. Neither did the Parthians make any attempts towards the recovery of their liberty: but Trajan, apprehensive they would soon shake off the yoke, thought it advisable to conciliate them, by giving them, instead of a Roman governor, a king of their own nation. With this design he repaired to Ctesiphon; where having assembled in a large plain the Romans and Parthians, he ascended a high throne, and declared Parthamaspatēs king of the Parthians, placing, with great pomp and solemnity, the crown upon his head. Parthamaspatēs, whom Spartian calls Pfama-

Extraordinary honours decreed him by the senate.

The Jews revolt in several places.

Most of the countries conquered by Trajan revolt;

but are again reduced.

Trajan gives a king to the Parthians.

* Dio, in Excerpt. Val. p. 720.

† Spart. in Adr. p. 6.

teffris, continued faithful to the Romans; but was despised by the Parthians as a slave to Rome, and retained scarce any authority over them.

In the following year, the twentieth and last of Trajan's reign, Niger and Apronianus being consuls, the emperor marched into Arabia, and made war upon the Hagareni, or Agareni, who had likewise revolted. What part of Arabia they inhabited we cannot determine, since we find no farther mention made of them, till the times of the Constantinopolitan empire, when the name of Hagareni became common to the Saracens and Arabians in general.

Ys. of Fl. The emperor besieged their city, which by Xiphilin is called *2466.* Atrā. It was neither great nor beautiful, says Dio Cassius*, but thought to be very opulent, as the sun was worshipped there, a circumstance which drew crowds of people thither with rich presents from the neighbouring countries. It was

*He besieges
Atrā;*

situated on the top of a high and steep mountain, well peopled, and surrounded with strong walls*. But its chief strength consisted in the barrenness of the neighbouring country, destitute of grass, wood, and even of water; so that a numerous army could not long subsist before it: hence it was neither taken now by Trajan, nor afterwards by Severus, though they had both made a breach in the wall. Trajan narrowly escaped being killed in one of the attacks; for having laid aside the ensigns of his dignity, that he might not be known, he headed his men in person: but the enemy discovering him, notwithstanding that disguise, by his grey hairs, and majestic air, aimed chiefly at him, wounded his horse, and killed a soldier by his side. Besides, as often as the Romans advanced to the attack, they were driven back by violent storms of wind, rain, and hail, and dreadful flashes of lightning. At the same time, they were in a strange manner infested in their camp by swarms of flies: so that Trajan was obliged to raise the siege, and retire. Soon after, as he was advanced in years, and worn out with so many toils, he was seized with a dropsy and palsy, which he himself ascribed to poison, but others thought natural. However, he was still for returning into Mesopotamia, to reduce some places which had revolted.

*but raises
the siege.*

*Is taken ill,
and sets sail
for Italy,*

His distemper increasing, he left the command of the army to Adrian, whom he appointed governor of Syria, and embarked for Italy. It was no sooner known that he had set sail, than all the countries, which he had conquered at a vast expence of blood and treasure, and by exposing himself to innumerable dangers, shook off the yoke, and recovered

* Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 785.

* Herodian. lib. iii. p. 538.

their former condition, in spite of the troops he had left to keep them in subjection. The Parthians drove out Parthamaspatēs; the Armenians chose themselves a king; and the greatest part of Mesopotamia revolted from Rome, and submitted to the king of the Parthians. Thus all the pains he had taken, all the dangers he had undergone, and the immense sums he had expended, proved in the end, of no effect. Upon his arrival at Selinus in Cilicia, which was afterwards from him called Trajanopolis, he was seized with a flux, which in a very short time put a period to his life. He died in the beginning of August, after having reigned nineteen years, six months, and fifteen days, from the death of Nerva to the eleventh of August, (for we know not the precise day on which he died), when Adrian received at Antioch the news of his death, which had been concealed for some time, and thereupon caused himself to be proclaimed emperor ². His body was was burnt at Selinus, and his ashes were carried by his wife Plotina, and his niece Matidia, or Matidia, in a golden urn, to Rome, where they were received with extraordinary pomp, and deposited under the stately column which he had erected, though it stood within the walls, where no person before him had been buried ⁷. The Parthic sports were for many years celebrated in memory of his victories in the East ³. Trajan left no children, nor are we told that he ever had any. He was succeeded by Adrian, a circumstance which was rather owing to the favour of Plotina, than to any extraordinary kindness of Trajan towards him: for though the emperor was nearly related to him, had been his guardian, and given him his niece in marriage, yet he never took great notice of him ⁴; nor did Adrian ever shew any particular affection for Trajan (E).

The Parthians drive out their king.

Trajan dies at Selinus in Cilicia.

His ashes are conveyed to Rome, and deposited under his column.

We

^x Dio, p. 786. Aurel. Epit. Julian. Cæsar. p. 39.
lib. lxi. p. 788. Ciaccon. col. Traj. Vict. Epit.
mist. Orat. xvi. ² Spart. in Adr. p. 3.

^y Dio,
^z The-

(E) Hence it was commonly believed, that Trajan did not adopt him; but that Plotina, who was a great friend to Adrian, introduced, after the death of her husband, a supposititious person, who, counterfeiting the voice of the dying emperor, declared, that he adopted Adrian. Dio Cassius tells us, in express terms, that Trajan never adopted Adrian; but that the

whole affair was managed by Plotina and Atianus, or rather Tatianus, who had been, jointly with the emperor, Adrian's guardian; and adds, for this reason the emperor's death was for some days concealed. This Dio Cassius learned of his father Apronianus, who, as he had been governor of Cilicia, where the emperor died, had thence certain intelligence of what

*Great
works per-
formed by
Trajan.*

We shall close the history of this great emperor's reign with a succinct account of his noble and useful works. Aurelius Victor says he was the first who introduced the use of post-chaises; but that invention is generally ascribed to Augustus ^b, and was probably only improved by Trajan, as it was after his time by several other emperors, as appears from Gothofredus, who treats of this subject at length in his comments upon the Theodosian code. He made, at an immense charge, a large and convenient road, leading through many barbarous nations, from the most distant coasts of the Euxine Sea to those of the ocean in Gaul ^c. He built several magnificent libraries in Rome, and a stately sheatré in the Field of Mars ^d. He adorned the city with many magnificent edifices, enlarged the circus, repaired a great number of ancient buildings, and supplied those quarters of the city with plenty of water, which by other princes had been neglected. But the most magnificent of all his works was the great square, which he made at Rome, and called from his own name, having for that purpose levelled a hill a hundred and forty-four feet high. In the midst of the square, he erected the famous column, which is still standing, to serve him for a tomb, and at the same time to shew the height of the hill which he removed, as appears from the inscription on the basis, dated the seven-teenth year of his tribunitial power, which was the 114th of the Christian æra. The emperor Constantius, when he came to Rome in 357, found nothing in that stately metropolis which he admired so much as Trajan's Square ^e. The architect employed by Trajan in this inimitable work, was one Apollodorus ^f. During this prince's reign, most of the provinces of the empire suffered greatly by earthquakes, and were grievously afflicted with a dreadful plague, with famine, and frequent conflagrations ^g. At Rome the Tiber overflowed its banks with incredible violence, laid great part of the city under water, overturned many houses, and greatly damaged the fields; though Trajan caused a

*His square
and column.*

^b Vide Cod. Theodof. tom. ii. p. 510, 511.

^c Aur. Vict.

^d Plin. Paneg. p. 96. Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 778.

^e Ammian.

lib. xvi. p. 71.

^f Dio, p. 789.

^g Vict. Epit.

what had passed at his death. Besides, the letters written to the senate concerning this adoption were not signed by Trajan,

but by Plotina, who had never before signed any of her husband's dispatches (1).

(1) Dio, lib. lxxix. p. 787, 788.

canal to be dug, in order to convey the water into its natural channel ^h (F).

Trajan, notwithstanding his humanity and other amiable qualities, suffered the Christians to be persecuted in most provinces of the empire. As he published no new edicts against the Christian religion, he is not reckoned by Tertullian among the persecutors of the church ⁱ. But that he was an enemy to the Christians, and highly prejudiced against them, is manifest from Pliny's letter to him ^k, and his answer to Pliny. This may be ascribed to his beholding the Christians, who were already very numerous, and multiplied daily, with a jealous and suspicious eye, as the underminers of the religion of the empire, and enemies to the gods adored at Rome, and in all the Roman provinces. Besides, he accounted them establishers of *hetæriæ*, or *illegal societies*, which usually breed factions and seditions; whence all societies, or colleges, not authorized by an imperial edict, or a decree of the senate, were forbidden, and the persons frequenting them adjudged guilty of treason: but after he had been informed by Pliny of their innocence, he could not, nor indeed did he entertain any sinister opinion of their discipline: but, nevertheless, instead of putting an immediate stop to the persecution, he sent directions

Trajan suffers the Christians to be persecuted.

^h Plin. lib. viii. ep. 17. lib. x. ep. 102.

ⁱ Baron. ad. Ann. 100.

^k Plin.

(F) Phlegon tells us, that, in Trajan's time, a woman was delivered at Alexandria of five children the same day, three males, and two females, who were brought up with great care by the emperor. The next year the same woman was delivered of three children (2). We read in Plutarch (3), that in Trajan's reign a Vestal, named Helvetia, going on horseback, was struck dead with a flash of lightning, and thrown quite naked on one side, and her horse on the other; which the soothsayers looked upon as presaging something highly dishonourable to Vestals, and the Roman knights. Accordingly, not long after, the

slave of a knight, named Butices, voluntarily deposed, that his master, and several others of the equestrian order, had for a long time carried on a criminal conversation with three Vestals, Emilia, Licinia, and Martia, who were immediately punished, and the knights their accomplices. But the pontiff, having first consulted the books of the Sibyls, declared, that the crime was to be expiated by burying alive in the Forum Boarium, or the Ox-market, two men and two women, natives of Greece and Gaul; a barbarous expedient, which was practised accordingly.

(2) Phleg. Mir. cap. 29.

(3) Plut. Quæst. Rom.

into

*His unjust
proceed-
ings against
them.*

into Bithynia, that no inquisition should be made for the Christians, but that such as were accused should be punished; which was, as Tertullian observes in his Apology¹, declaring them innocent, and at the same time ordering them to be treated as criminals. This ordinance continued in force till the persecution of Severus, that is, for almost a whole century. As Trajan was a generous encourager of learning, under him the efforts of genius and study began to revive²; and his reign became famous for a great number of eminent historians, poets, orators, and philosophers (G).

C H A P.

¹ Tertull. Apol. cap. 2.
Agr. cap. 2, 3;

² Plin. Pan. p. 84. Tacit. Vit.

(G) These were Julius Frontinus, Cornelius Tacitus, Pliny the younger, Pompeius Saturninus, Titinius Capito, Claudius Pollio, Verginius Romanus, &c. Sextus Julius Frontinus was prætor in the first year of Vespasian's reign, but yielded that dignity to Domitian, after having held it but one day, or two at most. Some years after, he commanded in Britain with great reputation and success, till the ninth year of Vespasian's reign, when he was succeeded by the celebrated Agricola. He was a great civilian, and one of the greatest commanders of his time. He wrote four books of Stratagems, which have reached our times, and are supposed to have been inscribed to Trajan. Nerva committed the fountains and aqueducts of Rome to his care; on which occasion he wrote the treatise of Aqueducts, which has reached us; as have done some other small pieces of his, and are to be found in the collection which Scriverius has made of the ancients who have treated of the

military art, and published at Antwerp in 1607.

Cornelius Tacitus, the greatest orator, statesman, and historian of his time, was, as is commonly supposed, the son of Cornelius Tacitus, a Roman knight, and procurator of Belgic Gaul. He was prætor, under Domitian, in the year of the Christian æra 88, the seventh of that prince's reign, and consul under Nerva in 97, being substituted to Verginius Rufus, whose panegyric, or funeral oration, he composed and pronounced (1). He married in 77, or 78, the daughter of the celebrated Cneius Julius Agricola (2). He pleaded at the bar, even after he had been consul; and, by his eloquent speeches, gained the reputation of the greatest orator of his time (3). He was much admired by Pliny, who lived in close friendship with him, and by all men of learning, who esteemed it a great honour to be acquainted with a person of his extraordinary accomplishments (4). Though he was the greatest orator of his time, he is now

(1) Plin. lib. ii. ep. 1. (2) Tacit. Vit. Agr. cap. 9. (3) Plin. lib. ii. epist. 1, 11. (4) Idem, lib. iv. epist. 13, 15. lib. ix. ep. 20.

known

C H A P. LVI.

The History of Rome, from the Death of Trajan to the Death of Marcus Aurelius, when the Power of the Roman Empire began to decline.

ADRIAN, who succeeded Trajan in the empire, was the son of Ælius Adrianus Afer, cousin-german to that prince, and of Domitia Paulina, sprung from an illustrious house in Cadiz. His family came originally from *Adrian. His extraction, employment, &c.*

known only by his historical works, which can never be sufficiently admired and commended. His life of Agricola, which Lipsius thinks one of the finest pieces in the Latin tongue, was, as we conjecture from the preface, one of the first pieces he composed, and probably published in the very beginning of Trajan's reign. The work, which comprises the lives of the emperors, from the death of Galba to that of Domitian, ought to be placed next; for, in his Annals, he refers the reader to his account of the reign of Domitian (5). That work, which is by Tertullian (6), and other ancients, called the History of Tacitus, comprised the transactions of the Romans, both at home and abroad, from the year 69 to the year 96, of the Christian æra; but only his account of the year 69, and part of the year 70, has reached our times. Having ended his history, he began his Annals (for so he himself styles them) from the

death of Augustus to the reign of Galba, in which there are many considerable chasms. He had reserved, as he himself tells us (7), for the study and employment of his old age, the reigns of Nerva and Trajan; but that work, it seems, he never undertook, no mention being made of it by any of the ancients. He likewise proposed writing the history of Augustus's reign; but St. Jerom knew of no other historical works of Tacitus, except his History and Annals, which were in all thirty books (8). Of these are now remaining, not without several chasms, only sixteen books of his Annals, and five of his History.

Pliny was a native of Comum, now Como, the son of L. Cæcilius, by the sister of Pliny the elder, by whom he was adopted, and thence took the name of C. Plinius Cæcilius Secundus (9). He was born in the eighth year of Nero's reign, the 61st of the Christian æra, and studied elo-

(5) Tacit. Annal. cap. 11.

(6) Tertull. Ap. cap. 16. & lib. de Spectac.

(7) Tacit. Hist. lib. i. cap. 1.

(8) Hier. in Zac.

(9) Plin. Prol. & lib. v. ep. 8.

from Italica in Spain, the native city of Trajan, whither Adrian, in the account he wrote of his own life, pretend-

quence under Quintilian (1) with such success, that he and Tacitus were reckoned the greatest orators of their time. In his youth he followed the profession of arms (2), was prætor under Domitian, and under Trajan consul, augur, and governor of Pontus and Bithynia. But his chief employment was to plead causes, which he did with great eloquence, and equal disinterestedness, not accepting of his clients fees or presents of any kind, even before the law prohibiting them passed in the senate. He published several harangues or speeches, none of which have reached our times, except his panegyric upon the emperor Trajan. He himself made and published a collection of such of his letters as he thought the most diverting and instructive (3); and of these are still extant ten books, which have been of signal use to us in compiling the reign of Trajan. He was a man of great honour, probity, disinterestedness, and good-nature; of which we find innumerable instances in his letters. He presented several individuals with considerable sums, namely, Quintilian, on occasion of the marriage of his daughter (4); the poet Martial, when he left Rome, to return to Spain, his native country (5); and one Romanus Firmus, to make up the sum requisite for his being raised to

the equestrian order (6). He was not possessed of a large estate; but, by bestowing little upon himself, he could afford bestowing a great deal upon his friends, as he had no children (7). He at once discharged all the debts of one of his friends, substituting himself in the room of all his other creditors, who had brought him into great trouble. When his friend died, his daughter Calvina was for renouncing the inheritance; but Pliny, to save the reputation of the deceased, generously forgave her what she owed him, though he had contributed a considerable sum towards her fortune, when she was married (8). The reader will find in Pliny's Letters innumerable other instances of his generosity and disinterestedness, which the brevity we have proposed to ourselves will not allow us to relate in this place.

Pompeius Saturninus flourished under Trajan, and is highly commended by Pliny, with whom he lived in strict friendship, as an excellent orator, poet, and historian (9); but his works have been long since lost.

Titinius Capito is likewise mentioned by Pliny, as a writer of no mean character. He described the deaths of illustrious men, amongst whom were some of his cotemporaries, condemned, no doubt, by Domitian (1).

(1) Plin. lib. ii. ep. 14.

lib. i. ep. 1.

(2) Idem, lib. i. ep. 10.

(3) Idem, lib. vi. ep. 32.

(4) Idem,

ep. 27.

(5) Idem, lib. i. ep. 19.

(6) Idem, lib. ii. ep. 4.

(7) Idem, lib. ii. ep. 4.

(8) Idem, lib. vii. ep. 16.

(9) Idem,

lib. viii. ep. 12.

ed, that his ancestors had removed some ages before from the city of Adria in the country of the Picentes, now the dukedom of Atri in Abruzzo. Marullinus, his great-great-grandfather, was the first Roman senator of the family^a. He was born, according to Spartian, in Rome, on the twenty-fourth of January, in the year 76 of the Christian æra, when Vespasian was consul the seventh time, and Titus the fifth. He was named P. Ælius Adrianus, or Hadrianus; to which names, after his accession to the empire, he added that of Trajan^c. His father dying when he was only ten years old, left him under the guardianship of Trajan and Coclius Tatianus, or Attianus, a Roman knight. He applied himself to the study of the Greek tongue, and was, at the age of fifteen, so thoroughly acquainted with that language, that he was commonly called, the young Grecian. He then went to serve in Spain, and remained there till he was recalled by the interest of Trajan, with whom he lived as his son. He was soon after appointed by Domitian one of the decemvirs, and raised to the command of the second auxiliary legion, with which he was sent into Mœsia about the latter end of that prince's reign. We are told, that in Mœsia an astrologer assured him, that the sovereign power was by the fates destined to him; which was confirming what his great-uncle Ælius Adrianus had foretold many years before. When Trajan was adopted by Nerva, Adrian was dispatched with the congratulations of the army upon that occasion, and afterwards removed by Nerva from Mœsia into Upper Germany; whence he hastened, upon the death of that prince, to carry the first intelligence of that event to Trajan. Servianus, who commanded in Upper Germany, and was no friend to Adrian, though he had married his sister Paulina, detained him, till he had forwarded an express to Trajan with the news of Nerva's death, and afterwards supplied him with an old chariot, which broke down by the way, that he might not ingratiate himself with the new emperor, by first informing him of his accession to the empire. Nevertheless, Adrian pursued his journey on foot with such expedition, that he arrived in Lower Germany before the express. Trajan kept him about his person; but, though he was his kinsman, and his guardian; though he gave him afterwards his sister's grand-daughter, Sabina, in marriage, yet he never conferred any extraordinary honours upon him. In his youth he had squandered

Trajan conferred no extraordinary honours upon him.

^a Spart. in Adr. p. 1—3. Paris. 1620.
p. 786. Spart. in Adr. p. 1—3, 8.

^c Dio, lib. lxxviii.

away his estate, and contracted great debts; which, with his other vices, Servianus took care to exaggerate to the emperor, in order to estrange his mind from him, and prevent his adopting him; for Servianus entertained a very indifferent opinion of Adrian, and believed that Rome could never be happy under such a prince: for, notwithstanding he was a person of most extraordinary parts, and possessed some great virtues, yet they were allayed with no less vices.

His extraordinary memory, learning, &c.

He was endowed with a memory almost beyond belief; he could repeat a whole book, however difficult and intricate the subject, after having once perused it; he knew the name of every soldier in the army, and remembered all those who had once served under him, though they had been long disbanded. He excelled in every branch of learning, and was, without comparison, the best orator, poet, grammarian, philosopher, and mathematician of his time; thoroughly skilled in physic; well acquainted with the virtues and properties of most herbs and minerals; in drawing and painting he was equal to the greatest masters, and sung and played upon all kinds of instruments, so as to be reckoned the most skilful musician of the age. He even applied himself to the study of judicial astrology and magic. He used at the same time to write, dictate to several secretaries, give audience to his ministers, and discourse with them about affairs of the greatest importance; for no man was better acquainted with his domestic affairs than he with those of the whole empire. His court was constantly crowded with philosophers, orators, poets, and mathematicians, for whom he always shewed a particular esteem, and took great pleasure in disputing with them, challenging the poets by extemporary verses, at which he had an extraordinary talent. Having one day excepted against an expression used by Favorinus, that philosopher modestly yielded, though he might have produced, out of good authors, sufficient authority for his expression; which self-denial seeming strange to his friends, "Do you think (said Favorinus pleasantly), that I will pretend to be more learned than one who has thirty legions at his command?"

Instances of his clemency.

In the beginning of his reign, he gave many instances of his clemency and condescension; but afterwards caused several persons to be unjustly put to death: whence some writers extol him as a most merciful prince, while others represent him as naturally inclined to cruelty, but often for-

P Spart. in Adr. p. 1.—3. Ammian. lib. xxx. Dio, lib. lxxix. p. 790.

giving injuries, through fear of undergoing the fate of Calpurnia, Nero, or Domitian. In the beginning of his reign, Tatianus advised him to condemn three persons, who, he said, would not fail to excite disturbances; namely, Bebius Macer, governor of Rome; Laberius Maximus, and Crassus Frugi, of whom the two latter had conspired against Trajan, and were then in exile: but the emperor would not hearken to any suggestions against them, saying, it would be altogether unjust and tyrannical to punish any one for a crime which he was only likely to commit¹. He allowed free access to his person, and seemed never better pleased than when they spoke to him freely, or reminded him of his faults (H).

He was courteous and affable towards persons of all ranks, *Kind to his friends*, conversed familiarly with his friends, and visited them, nay, and his freedmen, when indisposed, twice or thrice a day, comforting them in their sickness, and assisting them with his advice. He frequently entertained them at his table, and honoured them with his company at their houses, without being invited, conversing more like a private person than a prince. He refused them nothing which he thought reasonable to grant, and enriched some who had never asked him the least favour². At the same time he gave ear to *but gives ear to slanderers*, flanderers, and believed every tale that was whispered against them; whence all those whom he had most favoured, and raised to the highest honours, were in the end disgraced, treated as enemies, and either put to death or banished. His liberality knew no bounds; he allotted large sums for *His liberality*, the maintenance of poor children of both sexes, and in that

¹ Spart. p. 10.

² Idem. p. 7. Dio, p. 791.

(H) A woman having one day, applied to him on occasion of a vexatious law-suit, the emperor told her, that he was not then at leisure to hear her. The woman, not satisfied with this answer, cried out to him aloud, "To what purpose, then, are you emperor?" with which frankness Adrian was so well pleased, that, postponing all other affairs, he attended her with great patience, and dismissed her fully satisfied⁽¹⁾. The Roman people demanding one day, with great clamour in the theatre, something which Adrian was not inclined to grant them, he commanded the public crier to proclaim silence, with the imperious word *tacete*, *be silent*, used by Domitian on the like occasion; but the crier, instead of obeying him, said only, "The emperor begs you would be silent;" which Adrian was so far from resenting, that he commended his prudence; and amply rewarded it.

(1) Dio, lib. lxxix. p. 790.

particular excelled even Trajan. Such senators as were by misfortunes reduced to poverty, he settled pensions suitable to their rank, and the number of their children. Among the populace he distributed yearly an immense quantity of corn; he made large presents to such of the knights as were not able to support their dignity, and supplied all those whom he appointed governors of provinces, or commanders of armies, with horses, mules, cloaths, and money, to defray the charges of their journey. During the feast of Saturn, he used to send presents to his friends, embracing that opportunity to reward them for their fidelity, and attachment to his person. His presents to kings and princes always exceeded those which he had received at their hands. Such of the public professors as were no longer able to discharge their office properly, he dismissed with marks of honour, and liberal allowances. As he spent most part of his reign in visiting the provinces of the empire, he left in every place marks of a magnificence truly great and princely. He is said never to have seized unjustly any man's property; neither would he ever receive legacies left him by persons who were not known to him, or by such of his friends as had children.

*Respects
the senate.*

*Is impar-
tial in the
administra-
tion of
justice.*

*Allows no
power to
his freed-
men.*

He shewed on all occasions a high respect for the senate, consuls, and other magistrates, transacting nothing without their advice. He scarce ever failed assisting at their assemblies, when he was either at or near Rome, and usually waited on the consuls to their houses. He would not suffer the Roman knights to sit as judges in the cause of a senator, though that had been customary when the cause was pleaded before the emperor in person; neither would he allow of any appeals from the senate to himself. He administered justice with great impartiality, following in that particular the advice of P. Jubentius Celsus, Salvius Julianus, and Neratius Priscus, all men of great probity, and the best civilians in Rome. He enquired rigidly into the conduct and behaviour of his ministers, discharging them when guilty of the least injustice or misdemeanour. He allowed his freedmen no power; and such as pretended to have any, in order to gain credit or wealth, he punished with the utmost severity (1). He was an enemy to all

* Spart. p. 10—17. Dio, p. 790. Philost. Soph. cap. 27.

(1) Observing one day from his window one of his freedmen walking between two senators, he sent one of his attendants to give him a box on the ear, and tell him, that it did not become him to walk between two persons to whom he might one day be a slave (2).

(2) Spart. p. 10.

pomp

pomp and parade; therefore he would never suffer the senators to attend him but upon business. He usually returned from the senate in a sedan, that the senators might be dispensed from accompanying him to the palace. He would not suffer his name to be put upon any of the stately buildings which he erected, except upon the temple which he built in honour of Trajan; but, at the same time, consented that several aqueducts and cities should bear his name¹. Out of Rome he entirely laid aside the port and majesty of an emperor; in his garb and dress he varied little from a common soldier; his diet was such as chance presented; he usually marched on foot, with his head bare, making no distinction between the frozen mountains of the Alps, and the scorching deserts of Africa; he visited the soldiers in person when sick, took particular care of their provisions, and made them presents; but, at the same time, forbade the use of arbours, shady walks, and bowers; banishing from the camp whatever seemed in the least to encourage luxury and dissipation. He was acquainted with every soldier in the army, knew his age, and remembered his exploits. He preferred none but men of courage, strength, and good characters, saying, "Such as the officers are, such will the soldiers soon be." By these means he revived and restored the ancient military discipline, which, by the negligence of many princes, had been decaying since the time of Augustus².

*He revives
the ancient
military
discipline.*

He is generally censured by the ancients as too inquisitive, and prying into every one's secrets, though they did not concern him; as addicted to the most infamous pleasures, and abandoned to all manner of superstition; a weakness which was the chief cause of his persecuting the Christians, whom he detested as enemies to the idolatrous worship of his gods³. He delighted much in hunting, and is said to have killed bears, lions, and other wild beasts, with his own hand. He founded a town in Mœsia, which he called Adrianotheræ, that is, Adrian's Chace, because he had killed a bear upon the spot. He loved his hunting-horses and dogs to such a degree, that he built them tombs, and wrote their epitaphs⁴. He was the first emperor who let his beard grow, to cover some scars, which disfigured that part of his face.

His vices.

Having thus given a sketch of the virtues and vices of Adrian, we shall now proceed to the history of his reign. Having caused himself to be declared emperor on the ele-

¹ Spart. p. 9, 10. ² Dio, p. 790—791. ³ Ammian. lib. xxv. Hier. Chron. Tertul. Apol. cap. v. ⁴ Spart. p. 12, 13.

*His letter
to the se-
nate.*

*Adrian
abandons
the coun-
tries con-
quered by
Trajan.*

venth of August of the year 118, he immediately wrote to the senate, excusing his having assumed that title without their consent and authority, alleging, that he had been forced to it by the soldiery: he hoped they would confirm the title, without conferring other honours upon him till he should deserve them by his actions. In the same letter he solemnly promised never to put any senator to death, nor to transact any affair of consequence without their counsel and advice¹. He doubled the donative given by other emperors to the soldiery, and appointed Tatianus, or Attianus, formerly his guardian, with Similis, captains of the prætorian guards. Adrian had no sooner taken possession of the empire, than he deprived the brave Lulus Quietus, who had served with great reputation under Trajan, of the command of his countrymen the Moors, suspecting him of aspiring at the empire. As to the conquests made by his predecessor, he resolved to abandon them all; and accordingly withdrew his troops from Arminia, Mesopotamia, and Assyria; so that the Euphrates became once more the boundary of the Roman empire. He allowed the Armenians to choose themselves a king; and, as the Parthians were dissatisfied with Parthamaspates, whom Trajan had raised to the throne, he appointed him king of some neighbouring nation, and suffered the Parthians to recal Cosrhoes, whom Trajan had expelled two years before². He was likewise determined to abandon Dacia; but his friends prevailed upon him to retain a province, in which such numbers of Roman citizens had settled. However, he ordered the arches of the famous bridge built by Trajan over the Danube to be broken down, that the Barbarians might not make themselves masters of it, and invade the Roman territories³. Adrian, having given the necessary orders for maintaining the tranquility of the East, and appointed Catilius Severus governor of Syria, left Antioch, and departed for Rome, which he did not reach till next year. Epiphanius tells us, that, before he left the East, he travelled into Egypt; and that, passing by Jerusalem forty-seven years after it had been taken by Titus, on that occasion he resolved to rebuild it; which design, however, he did not put in execution before the latter end of his reign⁴.

In the following year Adrian entered upon his second consulship, having been named to that dignity by Trajan before he died, together with Fuscus Salinator, who had mar-

¹ Dio, lib. lxxix. p. 788.

² Spart. p. 10. Dio, lib. lxxviii, p. 776.

³ Eutrop. in Adrian.

⁴ Epiphan. *Mens. cap.* 14.

ried the daughter of Servianus, Adrian's niece. At this period Adrian returned to Rome, where he was received by all ranks of people with extraordinary demonstrations of joy; but he could not be prevailed upon to accept the triumph which had been prepared for Trajan, and was now decreed by the senate to the new emperor. At his desire, that honour was conferred upon the image of Trajan, which Adrian himself seems to have carried. Soon after his entrance into the city, he remitted to the inhabitants of Rome and Italy all debts, without restriction, due from them to the treasury, and to particular persons in the provinces what was owing by them for the last sixteen years, burning in Trajan's new square all the bonds and registers relating to those debts, in order to secure every one against such claims. The sum which he remitted on this occasion amounted to seven millions of our money: no wonder, therefore, that such a generous action is so much extolled by the historians of those times, and mentioned in most of the inscriptions and medals of this and the following year (K). Besides, he reduced the taxes both at Rome and in the provinces; and eased the cities of the heavy burden which had been laid upon them by Trajan, of supplying such as travelled for the service of the public with horses, chariots, and carriages, which were thenceforth provided at the charge of the emperor.

He arrives at Rome; but refuses the triumph decreed him by the senate. Remarkable instances of his generosity.

In the following year Adrian was consul the third time; but resigned the fasces at the end of four months, and never after resumed them. He had for his colleague one Rusticus, of whom we find no farther mention. The Sarmatians, and the Roxolani, whose country bordered on the Palus Maotis, now invaded Illyricum; an incursion which obliged Adrian to leave Rome, and hasten into Mœsia, where he defeated the Barbarians upon their return from Illyricum. Those who escaped saved themselves by swimming across the Danube, and soon after sent ambassadors to Adrian, who granted them honourable terms, and by that means terminated the war. They afterwards quarrelled with one another, and chose Adrian for their umpire, who composed their differences to the general satisfaction of

The Sarmatians and Roxolani defeated.

c Spart. p. 17.

(K) On one of the medals, to the bonds, with this legend, which has reached our times, "He enriches the whole world (3)." Adrian is represented with a torch in his hand, setting fire

(3) Span. lib. ix. p. 811. 815.

Four consulars put to death.

Several other persons accused and condemned.

each party. Having thus terrified the Barbarians, and at the same time gained their affections, he appointed Martius Turbo, whom he had recalled from Mauritania, governor of Pannonia and Dacia, and led his army into Illyricum; whence he wrote to the senate, accusing Cornelius Palma, L. Publius Celsus, Domitius Nigrinus, and Lufius Quietus, of having formed a conspiracy against his life. They were all consulars, men of extraordinary parts, and had been greatly esteemed and beloved by Trajan; but nevertheless the senate, basely complying with the emperor's will, ordered them to immediate execution, without even acquainting them that they had been accused. As no one believed them guilty of the crime laid to their charge, their death drew upon the emperor the public hatred, who thereupon hastened to Rome, where he openly declared upon oath, that they had been executed against his will, and without his knowlege; but was not credited, says Dio Cassius, by those who knew, that Palma and Celsus had been always his enemies, and that he was jealous of Nigrinus and Quietus, who were equally beloved and esteemed by the Roman people^d.

Besides these four excellent men, several other persons of great merit and distinction were accused and condemned, as privy to the supposed conspiracy; so that the city was filled with dread and terror. But Adrian himself, having got rid of those whom he chiefly feared, put a stop to the cruel and unjust proceedings of the senate, by enacting that no person should be accused or tried upon the law of majesty. He was desirous of having Tatianus, formerly his guardian, and now captain of the prætorian guards, put to death; for he was a man of a haughty and imperious temper, and assumed greater power and authority than the emperor was willing to allow; but nevertheless Adrian, not thinking it adviseable to spill more blood, dissimulated his resentment for the present, and prevailed upon Tatianus to resign his command, by offering him a place in the senate and the consular ornaments, which he readily accepted. Marcus Turbo, governor of Pannonia and Dacia, one of the best officers of his age, succeeded him, and Septicius Clarus supplied the place of Similis, who this year resigned and retired from the city^e. Towards the end of the year the emperor went into Campania, where he relieved with great generosity the poor inhabitants of all the cities through which he passed.

^d Dio, lib. lxxix. p. 788.

^e Spart. p. 7.

The next consuls were L. Catilius Severus, whom Adrian had appointed governor of Syria three years before, and Titus Aurelius Fulvus, who succeeded Adrian in the empire, and is commonly known by the name of Antoninus Pius^f. This year Adrian, who said, that an emperor ought to imitate the sun, which illuminates not one place, but all the corners and regions of the earth, began his progress, with a design to visit in person all the provinces of the empire, and examine the state of each country subject to Rome, that he might not be obliged to depend entirely upon the accounts transmitted to him by his ministers and governors. Thus he employed almost the whole remainder of his reign, that is, near seventeen years. He began his progress with Gaul, where he viewed all the chief cities and Roman forts, and signalized himself by extraordinary bounties. From Gaul he went into Germany, where the flower of the Roman troops were cantoned. He spent some time there, in order to revive and establish among them, the ancient military discipline; for he did not leave Germany till the beginning of the following year, when Annius Verus, grandfather to the emperor Marcus Aurelius, and Augur, or, as he is called in the Alexandrian chronicle, Augurinus, were consuls.

Yr. of Fl.
2469.
A. D. 121.
U. C. 869.

Adrian resolves to visit all the provinces of the empire. He goes into Gaul, and thence into Germany.

During their consulate Adrian returned to Gaul, and from thence passed over into Britain, where he is said to have reformed many abuses^g. The greatest part of the island was subject to Rome; but the northern nations had, upon the departure of Agricola, revolted, and recovered their ancient liberty. Adrian did not think it prudent to make war upon, and reduce them again, but, in order to secure the countries belonging to the Romans against the incursions of the warlike Caledonians, he caused a rampart to be raised, extending from the river Eden in Cumberland to the Tine in Northumberland, eighty miles in length^h. In other counties too, where the Barbarians were not separated from the Romans by rivers, he ordered walls to be made of earth, strengthened with sharp stakes driven deep into the ground. In Britain he disgraced and discharged his secretary Suetonius Tranquillus, no doubt the historian, and Septicius Clarus, captain of the prætorian guards, for their disrespectful behaviour towards the empress Sabina.

Crosses over into Britain.

His wall there.

Having settled the affairs of Britain, he returned to Gaul, and built at Nîmes a magnificent palace in honour of Plo-

^f Onuph. in Fast. p. 220.
Eccles. Antiq. p. 1024. Dublin, 1635.

^g Spart. p. 6.

^h Usser. Britan.

*He returns
to Gaul,
and thence
goes into
Spain;*

*where he
is in dan-
ger of be-
ing assassi-
ated.*

*Returns to
Rome.*

*Goes to
Athens,
and from
thence into
the East.*

*Visits seve-
ral pro-
vinces, and
passes the
winter at
Athens.*

tina, Trajan's widow (L). From Gaul he proceeded to Spain, and passed the winter at Tarraco, now Tarragona, where he rebuilt the temple of Augustus, founded by Tiberius, and held a general assembly of the states, in order to compose the differences which subsisted amongst them, about raising levies to recruit the Roman armies. At Tarraco he fortunately escaped being killed by a slave, who, while the emperor was walking in his master's garden, assaulted him with a drawn sword. Adrian, closing with him, seized him, and delivered him to the guarda, who were hastening to his assistance: but afterwards, finding the slave was disordered in his senses, he committed him to the care of the physicians, and took no farther notice of the attempt.

From Spain the emperor returned to Rome in the month of April, as appears from an ancient inscription, Acilius Aviola and Cornelius Pansa being then consuls: but he did not remain long there; for either in the end of this, or the beginning of the following year, when Quintus Arrius Pætinus and Caius Ventidius Apronianus were consuls, he was, according to St. Jerom and Eusebius¹, at Athens. During his residence in that city, the Cephissus overflowing its banks, and laying great part of the city of Eleusina under water, he caused a bridge to be built over that river, and provided against its overflowing for the future². From Athens he passed into the East, where he was apprehensive of a war with the Parthians; but prevented hostilities by a conference, with whom history does not inform us, but it was, in all likelihood, with Coirhoes. Manius Acilius Glabrio and Caius Bellicius Torquatus being consuls, Adrian returned from the East through Asia, and visited Cilicia, Lycia, Pamphylia, Cappadocia, Bithynia, and Phrygia; ordering temples, squares, and other edifices, to be built at his expense in most of the chief cities of those provinces, especially in Nicomedia, Nicæa, and Cyzicus. He likewise visited the islands of the Archipelago, and arrived in the beginning of the following year, P. Cornelius Scipio Asiaticus and Vettius Aquilinus being consuls, in Achaia. He pass-

¹ Euseb. Chron. p. 221.

² Her. in Chron.

(L) No remains of this stately edifice or basilic, as Spartian calls it, are now to be seen; but the antiquaries take the magnificent amphitheatre, which the inhabitants call les Arenes,

the Pont du Guard, and several other ancient buildings, which are still to be seen in that city, to have been raised by Adrian, or by his successor Antoninus (1).

ed the remaining part of the winter at Athens, where he was initiated into the rites of Ceres and Proserpine, called the Eleusinian mysteries.

From Athens, after he had presided at the public games, and bestowed innumerable favours upon the inhabitants, he sailed to Sicily, where he was led by his curiosity to visit the top of Mount Ætna, in order to view the rising sun, which was said to exhibit on that eminence, all the colours of the rainbow. From Sicily he returned to Rome in the beginning of the following year, when Annius Verus, grandfather to the emperor Marcus Aurelius, was the third time consul, with L. Varius Ambibulus¹. The eleventh and twelfth years of Adrian's reign are quite barren of events. The consuls were Titianus and Gallicanus, Torquatus Asprenas and Annius Libo. In the third, P. Juventius Celsus, and Q. Julius Balbus Marcellus being consuls, the cities of Nicomedia, Cæsarea, and Nicæa, in Bithynia, were almost overturned by an earthquake, but rebuilt at the expence of the emperor, who was thence styled the Restorer of Bithynia^m. In the course of this year he departed again on a new progress, passing first into Africa; where, upon his arrival, it rained, after a five years drought; a blessing ascribed to his presence: this, together with the many favours he bestowed upon the inhabitants of that province, gained him the affections of all ranks of men. From Africa he returned to Rome, and caused the obsequies of Plotina, to whom he was indebted for the empire, to be performed with the utmost pomp and magnificence. She died either while Adrian was in Africa, or soon after his return from that country. He lamented her with many tears, appeared for nine days in deep mourning, composed verses in her praise, and caused her to be ranked among the gods.

Visits Sicily, and returns to Rome.

Rebuilds several cities at his own expence. Crosses over into Africa, whence he returns to Rome. Plotina dies, and is ranked among the gods.

The next consuls were Q. Fabius Catullinus and M. Flavius Aper, during whose administration a temple was built at Rome in honour of that city, and of the goddess Venus, which was called the Temple of Rome, and the Temple of the Fortune of Romeⁿ. On the erection of this temple Adrian changed the ancient name of the feast, which was yearly kept on the twenty-first of April for the foundation of Rome, calling it Romana, instead of Palilia^o. This edifice was one of the wonders which the emperor Constantius chiefly admired when he came to Rome. It was

Yr. of Fl. 2479. A. D. 131. U. C. 879.

The temple of Venus and Rome. Adrian returns to Asia,

¹ Dio, lib. lxi. p. 797.

^m Euseb. in Chron. p. 211. Birag.

p. 123.

ⁿ Ammian. lib. xvi.

^o Athen. lib. viii.

after-

*and there
confers
with the
Eastern
kings.*

*He visits
Palestine,
Arabia,
and Egypt.*

afterwards consumed by fire, and rebuilt by *Maxentius* ^(M). In the beginning of the summer *Adrian* left Rome, with a design to revisit the provinces of the East; and passing through Athens, pursued his journey to Asia, where he consecrated several temples. In Cappadocia he purchased a great number of slaves for the servile offices of the camp. To *Cosrhoes* he restored his daughter, who had been taken prisoner by *Trajan*, and promised to give him up his golden throne; which however he did not perform. He invited all the neighbouring kings to a conference, and many of them complied with the request. He entertained them with great pomp and magnificence, and loaded them with rich presents upon their departure. The *Bactrian* princes did not come, but sent deputies to conclude an alliance with the people of Rome. The kings of *Albania* and *Iberia* neither sent ambassadors nor came in person; an omission which they repented when they understood how the others had been received and entertained ¹. In *Syria* he ascended Mount *Casius*, in the neighbourhood of *Antioch*, to observe the rising sun, and to offer a sacrifice to *Jupiter*, who was worshipped upon that mountain; but he was overtaken by a violent storm of thunder and lightning, which fell both upon the priest and the victim. From *Syria* he passed into *Palestine* and *Arabia*, and from thence into *Egypt* ². It is observed in the *Alexandrian chronicle*, that the famous co-

¹ *Aur. Vict.* p. 516.

p. 7. ² *Dio*, p. 792.

¹ *Spart.* p. 27. *Arrian* in *Perip. Pont.*

(M) When the fabric was complete, *Adrian* sent the plan of it to the famous architect *Apollodorus*; which was tacitly telling him, that he was not the only great architect in the world; for though he himself had employed him, yet he bore him a private grudge, on account of his having checked him with great acrimony, for pretending, in *Trajan's* time, to give his opinion concerning certain buildings. *Apollodorus*, who was no flatterer, after having viewed the plan, desired those who brought it, to tell

the emperor from him, that the fabric was too low for the place in which it stood; and, on the contrary, the statues of *Rome* and *Venus* too tall: "The architect (added he pleasantly) has taken care that the goddesses shall not rise, nor walk out." *Adrian* was so offended at the freedom of this answer, that, though he had desired *Apollodorus* to acquaint him with his sentiments concerning the building, yet he banished him, and soon after, under some pretence or other, caused him to be assassinated (2).

(2) *Dio*, p. 789.

lossus of Rhodes shook this year, the fourteenth of Adrian's reign.

Next year Servius Octavius Lænas Pontianus and M. Antoninus Rufinus were consuls. During their administration, Salvius Julianus, one of the most learned civilians of his age, compiled, by the emperor's command, the Perpetual Edict, containing all the laws which had been yearly published by the prætors. This collection was called the *Edictum Perpetuum*, because it was to continue in force for ever, to be as a body of standing laws, to prevent the great confusion occasioned by the new edicts, and to serve as a guide and rule, in the administration of justice, throughout the whole empire. Adrian continued in Egypt all this and the following year, when Augurinus and Sergianus were consuls. At Pelusium he visited the tomb of Pompey the Great; and, finding it almost entirely demolished, ordered it to be repaired at his own expence, and performed the usual ceremonies in honour of the deceased hero. He disliked the fickle, turbulent, and satirical temper of the Egyptians, especially of the Alexandrians. Their city had, it seems, forfeited many of its ancient privileges, probably on account of some sedition; for St. Jerom tells us, that it was almost entirely ruined by the Romans; but Adrian not only repaired both the public and private buildings, and restored to the inhabitants their former privileges, but bestowed new favours upon them; for which they returned him solemn thanks, and conferred upon him what honours they could devise. But this sense of gratitude was not long-lived; for he no sooner left their city, than they published virulent lampoons against him and his favourites. Adrian from Egypt passed into Libya Cyrenaica, where he killed (for he took great pleasure in hunting) a lion of a monstrous size, which had committed great ravages in that country.

The Edictum Perpetuum.

He dislikes the satirical temper of the Alexandrians. He repairs the city of Alexandria, and restores to the Alexandrians their ancient privileges.

What rendered Adrian's journey into Egypt the more remarkable, was the death of Antinous, a beautiful youth, greatly beloved by a prince addicted to the most unnatural pleasures. He fell accidentally into the Nile, as he was sailing on that river with the emperor, and was drowned (M).

The death of Antinous, supposed to have been sacrificed by him.

* Chron. Alexand. p. 598.
xv. p. 677.

† Hier. Chron.

‡ Athen. lib.

(M) This is the account which Adrian himself gave of his death. But Dio Cassius assures us, that the emperor, who had applied himself to the study of magic, being, by the false

and execrable principles of that art, misled into a belief, that he should prolong his life by sacrificing a human victim to the infernal gods, was obliged to accept of the tender which Anti-

nous

He is ranked among the gods.

The emperor bewailed him, says Spartian *, with all the tenderness and weakness of a woman lamenting the death of her husband. To soothe, in some measure, his grief, he desired the Greeks to rank him amongst the gods; which they accordingly performed; so that in a short time all the Eastern provinces were filled with statues, temples, and chapels, consecrated to this new divinity (O). Adrian caused his body to be buried with the utmost magnificence, built a city in that place, and converted his tomb into a temple, where he was said to work miracles †; which we find exposed and ridiculed by the Pagans themselves.

Adrian returns to Syria.

In the following year, when Hiberus and Sifenna were consuls, Adrian returned to Syria, where he passed this and the next year, and honoured Servianus his brother-in-law with a third consulship, and gave him C. Vibius Juventius Varus for his colleague. While Servianus was consul, the emperor wrote a letter to him, giving him an account of the state of Egypt, and of Alexandria its metropolis ‡. At the same time he sent some presents, both to him, and his wife Paulina, the emperor's sister, who died soon after. As Adrian conferred no extraordinary honours upon her after her death, the Roman senate and people were the more displeased with those he had bestowed upon Antinous §. Early in the spring he left Syria, in order to return to Italy; but made a long stay at Athens, after having visited Thrace and Macedon. During his residence at Athens, the Jews revolted, provoked chiefly, says Dio Cassius, at Adrian's sending a Roman colony to Jerusalem; at his call-

Visits Thrace and Macedon, and returns to Athens.

* Spart. p. 7.
Vit. Sat. p. 245.

† Origen. in Cels. lib. iii. p. 132.
‡ Dio in Excerpt. Val. p. 714.

§ Vopisc.

nous made him of his life, all the rest preferring their own safety to the emperor's. Adrian would by choice have rather sacrificed his dearest friends, than his beloved catamite; but as no constraint was to be used, and none of them wished to prolong the emperor's life at the expence of their own, the offer of Antinous was accepted, and he was sacrificed (1).

(O) At Mantinea in Arcadia

a magnificent temple was erected to him by Adrian, solemn sports instituted, and priests appointed to offer victims in honour of the deified pathic (2). It was even pretended, that he uttered oracles; but his answers were commonly thought to have been composed by Adrian (3). The astrologers, having discovered, or pretended to discover, a new star, gave out, that it was Antinous (4).

(1) Dio, lib. lxxix. p. 793.
Span. lib. vii. p. 652—657.
(4) Dio, *ibid.*

(2) Dio, *ibid.* Spart. p. 8.
(3) Spartian, p. 7. Dio, *ibid.*

ing that city, after the name of his family, *Ælia Capitolina*; and his erecting a temple to Jupiter Capitolinus in the place where the ancient temple stood. Spartian tells us, that Adrian published an edict, forbidding them to be circumcised; which provoked them to take up arms, and attempt the recovery of their ancient liberty. Be that as it will, Adrian had no sooner left Syria, than they openly revolted. But of that rebellion, and the fatal consequences that attended it, we shall speak at large in a more proper place.

Dio Cassius, after having described the war which Adrian waged with the Jews, speaks of another, which broke out about the same time, with the Alani or Massagetæ, a people of Sarmatia, who, under the conduct of Pharasmanes, their king, committed dreadful ravages in Media, entered Armenia, and penetrated into Cappadocia; but soon withdrew from thence, not daring to encounter Flavius Arrianus, governor of that province, who was preparing to meet them. The instructions given by Arrian, concerning the march of the Roman army against the Alani, and the order to be observed in the battle, which, it was thought, would ensue, having reached our times ^a. The Roman army consisted, as appears from these instructions, of troops from various nations, commanded by Xenophon, who no doubt served under Arrian, governor of the province, since Arrian directs him how he is to conduct himself both in the march and battle.

The Alani invade the provinces of the empire.

Adrian in the mean time continued at Athens, much pleased with the customs and learning of the Athenians. He was admitted to the great mysteries of Eleusina, different from those in which he had been initiated some years before, and celebrated, according to Eusebius ^b, the second year of each Olympiad. As he had been created archon of Athens before he was emperor, he assumed the habit peculiar to that dignity, and, with the other magistrates, celebrated the great festival of Bacchus, distributing large sums, and an immense quantity of corn, among the populace ^c. He embellished the city of Athens with many stately buildings, especially with a library of astonishing structure. These edifices, had been by his orders begun before, but were completed this year, and consecrated by the emperor himself ^d. He likewise finished the magnificent temple of Jupiter Olympius, begun, according to Philostratus, five hundred and sixty years before. In this temple he dedicated

Adrian's generosity to the Athenians.

His buildings there.

^a Arrian. Mandat. in Alan. Upsalæ, ann. 1664. ^b Euseb. Chron. p. 214. ^c Dio, p. 795. Spart. p. 9. ^d Hier. Chron.

an altar to himself, and suffered the Greeks to build and consecrate a temple to him, which they called Panellenion^e, instituting on this occasion annual sports. In short, he embellished Athens with so many noble buildings, that he was revered as the second founder of that city; whence one quarter of it was from him called Adrianopolis. The Athenians employed part of the money with which he presented them, in building a city in the island of Delos, which they called Adrian's New Athens and Olympia^f. The Athenians of Delos are mentioned in an inscription still to be seen at Venice^g; but only some ruins of this city now remain, as well as of the many magnificent buildings which by the superstitious Pagans were erected in that island.

Yr. of Fl.

2483.

A. D. 135.

U. C. 883.

Adrian returns at length to Rome; where he receives Pharasmanes, king of Iberia.

This year, the nineteenth of Adrian's reign, the emperor left Athens, and returned to Rome, Luperus Pontianus, and Rufus Atilianus being consuls. He had not been long in that city, when ambassadors arrived from Vologeses, probably king of Armenia, with complaints against Pharasmanes, king of Iberia, and from the Iazyges, a people of Sarmatia, who were desirous to have their ancient treaties with the people of Rome confirmed by the emperor. Adrian received them in a very courteous manner, conducted them to the senate, and read to them an answer, which, at the request of the senate, he had previously composed. Pharasmanes came to Rome, with his wife and son, to answer the complaints of Vologeses, bringing with him rich presents for Adrian, who repaid them with others far more valuable. He also presented him with fifty elephants, and five hundred chosen men, to serve him as a guard; enlarged his dominions; suffered him to sacrifice in the Capitol; caused an equestrian statue to be erected to him; and assisted in person at a military exercise performed by him, his son, and the chief men of his court^h (P).

After Adrian had thus travelled almost over the known world, he fell into a lingering disease, attended with frequent bleeding at the nose, which the physicians ascribed

^e Spart. cum Not. Causab. p. 26.

^g Grut. p. 405.

^h Dio, p. 794.

^f Euseb. Chron. p. 215.

(P) Nevertheless, after so many presents, and such extraordinary honours, he introduced into the amphitheatre three hundred criminals to be devoured by the wild beasts, or to fight as gladiators, in the embroi-

dered tunics with which Pharasmanes had presented him, as if they had been fit only for such uses (1). But this, no doubt, happened after the departure of the Iberian prince.

(1) Spart. p. 9:

to his going constantly with his head uncovered in all the vicissitudes of weather. The loss of blood, as he was advanced in years, was followed by a dropsy, from which, as he entertained no hopes of ever recovering, he began to think of a successor; when several persons of great merit occurred to him; namely, Servianus, who had married his sister, and was now in the ninetieth year of his age; Fuscus, the grandson of Servianus, and his own great-nephew; Pletorius Nepos, his ancient and intimate friend; and Tereñtius Gentianus, a man greatly beloved and esteemed by the senate. These he judged, among the great men of Rome, the most capable of the supreme power; but nevertheless neglecting, and even conceiving an irreconcilable aversion to them, for no other reason than because they were equal to the empire, contrary to the expectation of all, and the advice of his friends, he made choice of L. Aurelius Annius Ceionius Commodus Verus; for he is called by all these names, and Adrian added those of Ælius and Cæsar. He was sprung from an illustrious family, of which we shall have occasion to speak hereafter; was endowed with many good qualities; had the port and air of a prince; was well versed in most branches of learning, especially poetry; and thought rather not unfit for the empire than equal to it. He was of a very weak and infirm constitution, and at the same time entirely addicted to lewdness and debauchery: it was commonly believed, that his beauty chiefly recommended him to Adrian, who is said to have adopted him, upon condition that he should consent to gratify the passion which he had conceived for him; but what passed between them on this occasion was never well known, says Spartian¹, both Adrian and Verus having bound themselves by a solemn oath to keep it secret. The adoption of Verus occasioned great rejoicings in Rome. Adrian gave a considerable sum to the people, distributed three thousand sesterces amongst the soldiery, exhibited games in the circus, and combats of gladiators. But as the new Cæsar's weakness daily increased, and he began to vomit blood, Adrian soon repented his choice, telling the captain of his guards, that he placed his hopes and support on a falling wall; that he had lost the four thousand sesterces which he had distributed among the people and soldiery; and had adopted not a son, but a god, alluding to the custom which obtained among the Romans, of deifying their emperors and Cæsars. These words being repeated by the captain of the guards to others, came at length to the ears

*He adopts
Commodus
Verus.*

*His cha-
racter.*

*Adrian re-
pents his
choice.*

¹ Spart, in Æl. Ver. p. 34.

of Verus, and so sensibly affected him, that they are thought to have greatly contributed to his death, which happened in the beginning of the following year. The officer was immediately cashiered, and banished the court.

*Verus is
sent into
Pannonia.*

Verus, a few days after his adoption, was created prætor, and sent to govern the province of Pannonia; in which employment he acquitted himself with reputation, and shewed himself well qualified for the command of an army. In an inscription of the following year, the twenty-first of Adrian's reign, he is styled emperor^k; whence we may conclude, if there is not some mistake in the inscription, as father Pagi^l pretends, that he waged war in those parts; of which war, however, no mention is made by historians.

*Adrian re-
tires to Ti-
voli.*

In the following year Adrian raised to the consulship his adopted son Verus, and gave him for his colleague Sex. Vetulenus Civica Pompeianus, whose sister Verus had married. This year Adrian retired to Tibur, now Tivoli, where he employed his time in building a magnificent villa^m, the stately ruins of which are still to be seen in the possession of the Roman Jesuits. Aurelius Victor relates, that in this retreat he abandoned himself, as Tiberius had done formerly at Capræ, to all manner of lewdness; but he was soon seized with a bloody flux, which reduced him to a miserable condition. In that state, giving way to his natural cruelty, which, till then, he had restrained, he ordered many illustrious persons, under various pretences, to be arraigned and executed, and others to be privately murdered. Among the former were Servianus, his brother-in-law, and his great-nephew Fuscus, who, he pretended, had formed a design of seizing the empire. Fuscus was but eighteen, and Servianus ninety. To palliate his cruelty, to which he had, says Spartian, a great inclination, he used to lament the unfortunate condition of princes, whose lives, he said, were never thought to have been in danger till they were killed. Next year Ælius Verus Cæsar was consul the second time, with P. Coelius Balbinus Vibullius Pius, who had been raised by Adrian to the rank of a patrician, and was one of the ancestors of Coelius Balbinus, whom we shall see preferred to the empire in the year 237, that is, a hundred years afterⁿ. This year the Jewish war being ended, Julius Severus, who had reduced that rebellious nation, was appointed governor of Bithynia, where he behaved with such justice and moderation, having nothing in view but the welfare and happiness of the people

*Abandons
himself to
cruelty, or-
dering se-
veral illu-
strious per-
sons to be
put to
death.*

^k Gruter. p. 23.
p. 98.

^l Pagi, p. 137.

^m Noris, Epist. conf.
ⁿ Onuph. Idat. &c. Gruter, p. 393.

committed to his charge, that his name was famous in that province more than a hundred years after ^a.

The next consuls were Camerinus and Niger ^b. In the beginning of this year Verus, who had passed part of the preceding one in Pannonia, being returned to Rome, and finding himself greatly indisposed, took a medicine, which proving too strong for him, he fell into a sleep, and died the very day in which he was to return thanks to the emperor for the honour he had conferred on him. The speech which he had prepared for this purpose, is commended by Spartian, in whose time it was still extant ^c. Dio Cassius asserts, that he was carried off by a violent voiding of blood ^d. His funeral was performed with the utmost pomp and grandeur, and his ashes were deposited in the stately mausoleum, which Adrian had begun for himself. The emperor caused him to be ranked among the gods, and, in several cities, ordered temples to be built and statues erected to his memory.

Yr. of Fl.
2486.
A. D. 138.
U. C. 886.
*Verus dies,
and is
ranked
among the
gods.*

Verus being dead, Adrian was some time in doubt, whom he should choose for his successor; but at length, seeing himself despised, says Aurelius Victor, on account of the weakness both of his body and mind, he declared his intention of adopting Titus Antoninus, upon condition, that he should adopt M. Annian Verus, called afterwards M. Aurelius, and L. Verus, the son of the deceased prince of that name ^e. Antoninus having taken some time to deliberate, whether he should accept of the adoption upon the terms proposed by the emperor, at length consented; and was accordingly adopted, with the usual ceremonies, on the twenty-fifth of February of this year, and at the same time vested with the tribunitial and proconsular power ^f. Many were displeased with this adoption; but no one more than Catilius Severus, governor of Rome, who aspired at the empire himself, and began privately to pave his way to it; but being discovered, he was deprived of his place, which was an employment for life. The empress Sabina died, it seems, after the adoption of Antoninus; for, in an ancient inscription, he styles her his mother ^g. She is thought either to have been poisoned by Adrian ^h, or so ill used, that she laid violent hands on herself. Adrian caused her to be ranked among the gods, not caring whether she was in the supernal or infernal regions, provided he was no longer troubled with her remonstrances.

*Adrian a-
dopts Titus
Antoninus.*

*Sabina Au-
gusta dies.*

^a Dio, p. 793.

^b Idat. Prosper, &c.

^c Spart. p. 11.

^d Dio, p. 796.

^e Adrian. Vit. p. 11.

^f Julius Capitol.

in Vit. Antonin. p. 18.

^g Onuph. p. 223.

^h Spart. p. 11.

*Adrian's
impatience
in his sick-
ness.*

*Attempts to
lay violent
hands on
himself.*

*Adrian re-
moves to
Baia.*

Adrian bore his distemper a long time with great firmness and patience; but being, in the end, tormented with violent pains in all his joints, he had recourse to magic, says Dio Cassius ²; and, by that art, once discharged his body of the watry humour with which it was filled: the humour being soon recruited, and his pains encreasing daily, he became in a manner furious, put several senators to death, and ordered Antoninus to take care, that some others, whom he named, were executed: but that humane prince acquainted them of their danger, and advised them to keep themselves concealed ¹. In the mean time, the emperor, desirous to end his insufferable pains with his life, often called for a dagger, and for poison, promising a great reward to such as should bring him either: but no one could, by any promises, be prevailed upon to contribute to his death. Having one day by chance found a dagger, he would have stabbed himself with it, had it not been wrested out of his hand by one of his domestics. He then commanded his chief physician to give him poison; but he chose rather to kill himself in his presence than obey his command. He often conjured his most faithful freedmen to dispatch him, and forced an Iazygian, named Mastor, to promise it; but Mastor fled, and never appeared till the emperor was dead. Another, whom he had obliged to make the same promise, acquainted Antoninus with it, who thereupon flew to the emperor's room, attended by the captains of the guards, and besought him to bear his illness, since it was unavoidable, with more patience and constancy; an exhortation which so provoked him, that he commanded the person, who had discovered his design, to be put to death: but Antoninus saved him, and henceforth carefully watched the emperor night and day, saying, he should think himself a parricide if he neglected to preserve his life as long as he was able ².

From Rome Adrian removed to Baia in Campania; and there, neglecting the advice of his physicians, he lived without any rule, chose what food and drink he liked best, and, by these means, hastened his death. He was convinced of the immortality of the soul, and seemed apprehensive of its future state, as appears from the celebrated verses (Q), which

² Dio, p. 797. ¹ Aur. Vict. in Adr. p. 12. Antonin. Vit. p. 17.
² Spart. p. 12.

(Q) The verses were;
Animula vagula, blandula,
Hospes, comesque corporis,

Quæ nunc abibis in loca,
Pallidula, rigida, nudula?
Nec, ut soles, dabis jocos.

Thus

which he composed and uttered a short time before he expired, enquiring of his soul, "whither it designed to go." He died at Baïæ on the tenth of July, after having lived sixty-two years, five months, and seventeen days, and reigned twenty years, and eleven months, wanting one day. Antoninus, whom he had left at Rome, and sent for when he found himself at the point of death, arrived, according to Spartian just before, according to others, soon after, he expired. His body was burnt at Puteoli, and his ashes were conveyed by Antoninus to Rome, where they were exposed in the gardens of Domitian, and afterwards deposited in the magnificent mausoleum which Adrian had constructed for himself near the Tiber, that of Augustus being quite full ^a.

Yr. of Fl.
2487.
A. D. 139.
U. C. 887.

His death.

Adrian had, by the cruelties committed in the beginning and the end of his reign, incurred the public hatred to such a degree, that the senate intended to annul all his acts, and call several persons to an account, who had enriched themselves by abusing the interest they had with their sovereign. They therefore at first unanimously opposed Antoninus, who demanded the same honours for the deceased which had been decreed to other emperors ^b: but Antoninus representing, with great modesty, that they could not condemn the memory of Adrian without annulling his own adoption, and degrading him from the empire, the respect and veneration they entertained for that prince, who added tears to his entreaties, inclined them at last to comply with his demands, especially when they saw a great number of persons appear, who were thought to have been murdered by Adrian, but had been carefully concealed by Antoninus ^c. The senate dreaded likewise the soldiery, who were greatly attached to Adrian. Antoninus built a temple at Puteoli, and instituted annual sports to his honour, with priests, fraternities, and victims. But what gave the emperor a far better claim to the title of Pius, was his inter-

*The senate
are for annulling his
acts;*

*but deify
him at the
request of
Antoninus.*

^a Jul. Capit. in Anton.

^b Eutrop. Antonin. Vit. p. 18.

^c Aur. Vict. in Heliog. p. 103.

Thus happily imitated by Mr. Prior.

Poor, little, pretty, flutt'ring thing,
Must we no longer live together?
And dost thou prune thy trembling wing,
To take thy flight thou know'st not whither!
Thy hum'rous vein, thy pleasing folly,
Lies all neglected, all forgot;
And, pensive, wav'ring, melancholy,
Thou dread'st and hop'st thou know'st not what.

ceding with the senate in behalf of those who had been banished by Adrian, and whom that prince, said he, would have recalled, had he lived longer^d.

*Adrian's
public
works.*

No prince, perhaps, ever raised so many public and private edifices as Adrian; for he built in most cities of any note, especially at Athens; and Greece, as appears from Pausanias, was full of his edifices, bridges, and aqueducts. At Rome he rebuilt the Pantheon, the temple of Neptune, the square of Augustus, the baths of Agrippa, and an infinite number of other public edifices, consecrating them again, but leaving the names of their first founders^e.

*His house
at Tivoli.*

His house at Tivoli was an extraordinary structure, adorned with fine paintings, representing, in one apartment, the infernal regions. This palace he styled his Lycæum, Academia, Prytanæum, Canopus, Pæcile, and Tempe, names of the most celebrated places abroad, and bestowed on the several apartments the titles of the different provinces. He built a new bridge over the Tiber, now known by the name of Ponte Sant Angelo, and near it his own mausoleum^f, which now serves for a fortress, and is called the castle of Sant Angelo^g.

*His bridge
on the Ti-
ber, and
mausoleum.*

*Many ci-
ties called
by his
name.*

Many cities, either built, repaired, or peopled by Adrian with colonies, bore, for some time, his name, or that of his family, which was Ælia; to wit, Carthage, Jerusalem, two cities in Spain; Murfa, now Essek, in Pannonia; Stratonice, in Macedon; Palmyra, in Syria; Neocæsarea, in Pontus; Adrianopolis, in Thrace, which still retains it; Adriane, or Adrianopolis, in Libya Cyrenaica; Antinopolis, in Egypt, called also Adrianopolis; Adrianothera, in Mysia, which retained that name in the fifth century; and Adriane, in the same province, the birth-place of Aristides the sophist, which, however, some writers suppose to be the same city with Adrianothera^h.

*His mili-
tary insti-
tutions.*

The regulations which Adrian established for the preservation of discipline among the troops, were afterwards observed as the military laws of the Romans, and are often quoted by Vegetius. Adrian was the first who directed, that each cohort should have its proper masons, architects, and such artificers as were employed in raising and embellishing edificesⁱ. The regulations which he introduced, with respect to the army, the court, and the tribunals of justice, were observed till the end of the fourth century. He was the first who employed the Roman knights in quality of secretaries, and committed his domestic affairs to their care, other emperors having employed in such offices

^d Anton. in Vit. p. 19.

^e Spart. p. 8.

^f Dio, p. 797.

^g Procop. de Bell. Goth. lib. i. cap. 22.

^h Vide Salmaf. ibid.

ⁱ Victor. Epit.

only their freedmen * (R). The Romans had on their estates what they called manufactures, or work-houses, where they kept great numbers of people, especially slaves, at work. These houses were like so many prisons, whither masters sent such of their slaves as had disobliged them, and even confined them in chains. Many, to avoid being lifted, or punished for crimes they had committed, fled to these work-houses, and were concealed. Besides, the owners of these manufactures were thought to seize passengers and strangers, to shut them up in these houses, and oblige them to labour, without their ever being afterwards heard of. Adrian, therefore, to obviate such inconveniencies and disorders, prohibited all work-houses, except those which belonged to the emperor, or to the public¹. In this reign flourished many persons eminent in most branches of literature, of whom we shall speak in our notes (S).

He abolishes all private work-houses.

The

* Spart. p. 11. ¹ Vide Salmaf. in Spart. p. 49.

(R) Spartian mentions some of the laws published by Adrian, namely, that the children of proscribed persons should enjoy the twelfth part of their fathers' estates: that if any one found a treasure in his own grounds, it should be entirely his; if in those of another, the owner of the ground should have the moiety of it; if in any public place, it should be equally shared with the treasury: that such as had squandered away their estates, should be publicly whipt in the amphitheatre, and banished the city: that men and women should use separate and distinct baths: that if a master be found killed in his house, not all his slaves should be put to death; but that those only should be put to the torture, who were near enough to have prevented the murder: that masters should no longer have power of life and death over their slaves; but that such slaves as deserved to

be capitally punished, should be tried and condemned by the magistrates. Porphyrius informs us, upon the authority of Pallas, who wrote before his time, that Adrian published an edict prohibiting all human sacrifices, which were still offered in several provinces of the empire (1).

(S) Adrian himself ought to be ranked amongst the writers who flourished at this time; for he published several works, both in prose and verse, upon various subjects; and, among the rest, a Greek poem, intitled, the Alexandriad, of which we find the seventh book quoted by some of the ancients (2). Spartian speaks of certain books composed by him, and published under the title of Catacriani; wherein he pretended to imitate Antimachus, whom he preferred to Homer. Adrian was, according to Dio Cassius and Spartian, so ambitious of fame,

(1) Spart. cum Not. Salmaf. p. 52. Porphyrius. apud Euseb. in Triennial. Constant. cap. 16. (2) Vide Voss. Hist. Græc. lib. ii. cap. 11. Dio, lib. lxi. p. 788.

*Antoninus
surnamed
The Pius,*

The emperor Titus Antoninus derived his origin, on the father's side, from the city of Nemausus, now Nîmes, in Lan-

that he wrote his own life in several books; but caused them to be published under the names of such of his freedmen as were persons of learning (3). Among these was Phlegon, a native of Tralles in Asia, who wrote a treatise on the Long-lived, and another on Wonderful Things. Some fragments of these works are still extant (4); and from a passage in the former it appears, that he had not put the last hand to that piece in the nineteenth year of Antoninus's reign, the 156th of the Christian æra.

Favorinus, well known by the writings of Aulus Gellius, who was his disciple, and by those of Philostratus, was a native of Arles in Provence, and from his birth an eunuch, by profession a philosopher and sophist, and well skilled both in the Greek and Latin tongues. He studied under Dio Chrysostomus, and, besides Aulus Gellius, had for his pupil the celebrated Herodes Atticus, whom he appointed his heir. He wrote a great many works quoted by the ancients (5); but his style was destitute of the gravity becoming a philosopher (6). He and Plutarch endeavoured who should write most books. They lived in great friendship, and Plutarch even inscribed one of his works to Favorinus (7), who died, it

seems, about the latter end of the reign of Antoninus (8).

Of all the philosophers who flourished in those times, Epictetus is by far the most renowned: Aulus Gellius calls him the greatest man the sect of the Stoics had ever produced (9). He is supposed to have been a native of Hierapolis in Phrygia, was for some time a slave, and belonged to Epaphroditus, whom Suidas calls one of Nero's life-guard (1). This is, without all doubt, Nero's celebrated freedman, to whom Josephus inscribed most of his works, and who was afterwards put to death by Domitian, as we have related in that prince's reign. Celsus, the famous champion of idolatry, writes of Epictetus, that while his master was one day squeezing his leg very hard, in order to torment him, Epictetus said to him very calmly, "You'll break my leg;" which happening accordingly, "Did not I tell you (said he, smiling), that you would break my leg (2)?" Epictetus was, as is supposed, set at liberty, but remained always very poor (3). Being obliged, by Domitian's edict, banishing all philosophers, to quit Rome in 94, he retired to Nicopolis in Epirus; whence he returned, upon that prince's death to Rome. He published several works, none

(3) Dio, p. 793. Spart. p. 6. (4) Phot. 256. Suid. p. 1071. Voss. Hist. Græc. lib. ii. cap. 11. (5) Idem, lib. ii. cap. 10. Suid. p. 1020. Philostr. Vit. Soph. 493. (6) Lucian, in Vit. Demonastis, p. 549. (7) Jonf. lib. iii. cap. 7. Gell. lib. ii. cap. 26. (8) Jonf. ibid. (9) Aul. Gell. lib. i. cap. 2. (1) Suid. p. 996. (2) Orig. in Cels. lib. vii. (3) Aul. Gell. lib. ii. cap. 18. & lib. xv. cap. 11.

Languedoc ^m. His ancestors are said by Aurelius Victor to have lived at Lanuvium, or rather Lavinium, in the neigh-

^m Jul. Cap. in Antonin. cum Not Salmaf. Paris. 1610.

of which, except his *Enchiridion*, or *Manual*, has reached us (4). But Arrian, his disciple, published a great work, which he pretends to consist entirely of what he had heard him say, and taken down, as well as he could remember, in Epictetus's own terms (5).

Arrian, a native of Nicomedia, was one of the most learned men of his age, and, on account of his eloquence and knowledge, commonly styled the Second Xenophon. He was preferred at Rome to the highest posts of honour, and even to the consulship (6); whence most writers take him to be the Flavius Arrianus, who, while he was governor of Cappadocia, repulsed the Alani, as we have related above. He lived at Rome under Adrian, Antoninus, and M. Aurelius (7). He published the familiar discourses of Epictetus in eight books; but only four of them have reached us (8), which are inscribed to one L. Gellius. He published twelve books more, containing the speeches of Epictetus (9), and wrote his life. Photius quotes several other books composed by him, to wit, the history of Bithynia, his native country, the history of the Alani, and that of the Parthians, in seventeen books, which he brought down to the war which

Trajan waged with them (1). He described the expeditions of Alexander the Great in seven books, which are still extant; and is thought by Photius to have excelled all who wrote on the same subject (2). He published, in ten books, the lives of the successors of Alexander; and gave, in one book, says Photius, an account of India (3). This account of India is now reckoned the eighth book of the history of Alexander (4). We have still his *Tactica*, whereof the beginning has been long since lost: to his *Tactica* are commonly added his instructions concerning the march of the army against the Alani, and the order to be observed in battle.

Plutarch was a native of Chaeronea in Boetia, where he was born in the reign of Claudius, about the year 50 of the Christian æra. He studied under Ammonius, an Egyptian philosopher, in the reign of Nero; and in that of Domitian taught at Rome. Suidas writes, that Trajan distinguished him with consular honours (5), meaning, no doubt, the consular ornaments; and ordered the magistrates of Illyricum to consult him in all affairs of importance. He continued at Rome till the death of Trajan, when he returned to his own

(4) Suid. p. 996. (5) Arrian. *Epict.* p. 1. (6) Phot. cap. 58.
(7) Voss. *Hist. Græc. lib. ii. cap. 11.* (8) Phot. cap. 58. (9) Idem
ibid. (1) Idem ibid. (2) Idem ibid. (3) Idem, p. 91.
(4) Voss. *Hist. Græc. lib. ii. cap. 11.* (5) Suid. p. 546.

neighbourhood of Rome: perhaps they settled there, after having removed from Nismes. The Aurelian family, which was

country, and there bore the chief employments (6). Plutarch published a great many works, which are well known, being translated into all the modern languages. Marcus and Caninius Celer, two celebrated sophists, flourished under Adrian, and published some declamations (7). Polemon, another famous sophist, in great favour with Adrian, was a native of Laodicea upon the Lycus, which some place in Caria, others in Phrygia; but spent the greatest part of his life at Smyrna, whither the youth flocked from all parts to hear him. He was several times sent by that city in quality of ambassador to the emperor Adrian, of whom he obtained great sums for the inhabitants.

Under Trajan and Adrian flourished, according to Suidas (8), Ptolemæus Chennus, Zenobius, Cephalæo, and Dionysius of Halicarnassus. Ptolemæus wrote several books, and among the rest, one intitled the Surprising History (9). Zenobius taught at Rome under Adrian, and translated the history of Sallust into Greek. He likewise made a collection of proverbs, which is still extant (1). He is sometimes called Zenodotus. Cephalæo, being banished his own country, retired into Sicily, where he published, in the

reign of Adrian, a history, beginning with Ninus and ending with Alexander (2). Dionysius of Halicarnassus, descended from the famous historian of that name, was a sophist, and is commonly styled Dionysius the Atticist, and the Musician, because he applied himself chiefly to the study of music, and published several works upon that subject: one among the rest he divided into thirty-six books, containing an account of the most famous poets, and players upon instruments (3).

Hereannius Philo, born in the city of Byblos in Phœnicia, wrote one book on Adrian's reign, twelve on the choice of books, and thirty on various cities, and the eminent persons they had produced: the latter work was abridged by Ælius Severus Athenæus (4). Philo (5) translated into Greek the history of Phœnicia written by Sanchoniatho, in his native language, about the time of the Trojan war (6). The preface, and some passages of this translation, have been transmitted to us by Eusebius (7). Philo himself wrote the history of Phœnicia, which is quoted by Eusebius (8), and Stephanus of Byzantium (9). Hermippus of Berytus, or of that neighbourhood, was one of Philo's disciples, and highly esteemed

(6) Ruald. cap. 25. (7) Philost. Soph. 24. (8) Suid. p. 646, 1126, 1447. (9) Phot. cap. 190. (1) Voss. cap. 11. (2) Suid. *ibid.* Phot. cap. 68. (3) Suid. p. 743. Voss. cap. 12. *Jonst. lib. iii. cap. 8.* (4) Suid. p. 1065. Voss. *Hist. Græc. lib. ii. cap. 10.* (5) Orig. in Cels. lib. i. p. 13. (6) Voss. *Hist. Græc. lib. i. cap. 1.* (7) Euseb. *Præp. lib. i. cap. 9.* (8) *Idem ibid. lib. iv. cap. 16.* (9) Voss. *ibid. lib. ii. cap. 10.*

was the present emperor's, is thought to have been very ancient; but was not distinguished very early with preferences

by Adrian, though the son of a freedman. He wrote five books upon dreams, which are quoted by Tertullian, and others (1). Paulus of Tyre, contemporary with Philo, published a treatise of rhetoric. He obtained of Adrian the title of metropolis for the city of Tyre (2). Leander Nicanor, of Alexandria, the son of Hermias, published several grammatical and historical pieces (3). Diogenianus, a native of Heraclea, published many treatises on grammar and geography, which Hesychius made use of in compiling his Lexicon (4). His collection of ancient proverbs is still extant. Under Adrian flourished, according to Vossius (5), Jason of Argos, who comprised in four books the history of Greece, to the death of Alexander. Ælian, author of the *Tactica*, lived at this time; for he addressed his work to Adrian. Another writer of the same name flourished about a hundred years after; whence it is no easy task to determine, which of these two was the author of the *History of Animals*, of the *Historia Varia*, and of other pieces which are, by the ancients, ascribed to an Ælian, but long since lost.

Under Adrian flourished the two Latin historians Suetonius and Florus. C. Suetonius Tranquillus was the son of Suetonius

Lenis, or Lætus, a Roman knight, who, at the battle of Bedriacum, commanded a legion in quality of tribune, as we have related in its proper place. Pliny the younger had a great friendship for him, kept him constantly with him, and wrote to one of his friends, that the more he knew him, the more he loved him, on account of his probity, ingenuity, prudence, and application (6). From the great number of authors, who have quoted his works, it appears, that they were generally read, and greatly esteemed, both by the Greeks and Latins. Tertullian quotes his book of the Roman shews (7), and St. Jerom that of illustrious men, upon the plan of which he wrote his own (8): perhaps the lives of the illustrious grammarians, orators, and poets, commonly ascribed to Suetonius, were part of that work. Vopiscus, speaking of his history of the twelve Cæsars, calls him an impartial and correct writer; but adds, that he cannot compare him to Sallust, Livy, Tacitus, or Trogus (9).

Florus is thought to have been a native of Spain, and of the lineage of the Senecas; that his family-name was L. Annæus Seneca; and that, being adopted by one Florus, he took the name of L. Julius Florus. Spartan, in the life of

(1) Tertull. de Anim. cap. 46. Voss. *ibid.* Orig. in Cels. Suid. p. 1043.

(2) Suid. p. 465. (3) Suid. p. 229. Voss. *ibid.*

lib. ii. cap. 12. (4) Suid. p. 737. (5) Voss. *ibid.*

(6) Plin. lib. x. (7) Tertull. Spec. cap. 5. (8) Hier.

Vir. Illust. Præf. (9) Vopisc. in Firm.

ments in Rome (T). T. Antoninus was born at Lavinium, on the nineteenth of September of the year 86, Domitian being then consul the twelfth time, with Cornelius Dolabella. He is styled by Julius Capitolinus, who wrote his life, T. Aurelius Fulvius Boionius Antoninus; but from several ancient inscriptions it appears, that, instead of Fulvius, we ought to read Fulvusⁿ. As from his infancy he behaved in a very dutiful and obliging manner towards all his relations, many of them left him estates, by which means he became exceeding rich. He was a great lover of the country and country diversions; but nevertheless did not decline public employments, in which he acquitted himself with great reputation, and universal applause. He was consul in 120, afterwards one of the four consuls appointed by Adrian to govern Italy, and then sent into Asia with proconsular authority; where, by the mildness of his government, his affability, and engaging behaviour, he gained the esteem and affections of persons of all ranks. Upon his return to Rome, Adrian appointed him one of his council, and transacted nothing without his advice^o. He married Annia Galeria, the sister of Marcus Aurelius's father, and had by her two sons and two daughters. The eldest of the daughters was married to Lamia Syllanus, but died soon after: she was probably named Aurelia Fadilla; for we find one of that denomination called, in an ancient inscription, the daughter of the emperor T. Antoninus^p. The other called Annia Faustina, was married to M. Aurelius, her cousin-german^q. The two sons, M. Aurelius Fulvus Antoninus, and M. Galerius Aurelius Antoninus, must

Hisife.

ⁿ Vide Salmaf. in Not. ad Anton. Vit. p. 47.

^o Dio, lib. lxx.

p. 800. Jul. Cap. p. 17.

^p Vide Mabill. Analest. cap. 4. p.

500.

^q Jul. Cap. p. 18—23.

Adrian, quotes some verses composed by a poet named Florus, whom most writers take to be the epitomizer of the Roman history; for that epitome was written in the reign of Trajan, and seems to be the product of a poetical genius. It is greatly esteemed by the learned, who nevertheless find fault with the author for not observing with due punctuality the order of time. It is not an abridgment of Livy; for with him the au-

thor often disagrees. Whether the summaries prefixed to each book of Livy's history were done by Florus, is uncertain (1).

(T) His grandfather Titus Aurelius Fulvus, or Fulvius, was the first consul of the Aurelian family. His father Aurelius Fulvus was likewise honoured with that dignity, and universally esteemed on account of his extraordinary accomplishments and integrity.

(1) Voss. Hist. Lat. lib. i. cap. 30.

have

have died very young; for no mention is made of them in history.

Antoninus is celebrated by all the ancients as one of the best princes that ever swayed a sceptre. His behaviour was extremely engaging; he was always ready to hear with patience the meanest of the people; to no one was ever admittance denied to his palace or presence, especially when they came to complain of his officers, ministers, or procurators. He was an enemy to all pomp and ostentation. His table was rich without extravagance, and frugal without meanness. He never courted the favour of the people, but seemed rather to despise popular applause, which had been the idol of most of his predecessors. He never flattered others, nor suffered any one to flatter his own person. He observed with great exactness the Roman laws and ceremonies. He offered in person, as high pontiff, the sacrifices, which had been performed by inferior priests; and never failed to assist, unless prevented by some indisposition, at all public acts of religion, shewing always a profound respect for the Deity. As he never admitted any to his friendship, with whom he was not thoroughly acquainted, he was a most constant friend, listened to no calumnies, nor entertained any fears or jealousies, as Adrian had done, who in the end was disgusted with all his old friends, and discharged them with ignominy. He was naturally of a mild temper, ever inclined to mercy, which he shewed even to the most vicious and wicked, choosing rather to deprive them of the means of doing mischief, than to punish them according to their deserts. During his long reign of twenty-three years, he is said never to have done any thing that favoured of cruelty, ill-nature, or that could give to any person whatever just motive of offence (U).

His character.

*His religion, com-
pancy in
friendship,
&c.*

*His clemen-
cy and
mildness.*

T. An-

* Jul. Cap. 18—23. Paus. lib. viii.

* Dio, lib. lxx. p. 800.

(U) When he arrived in Asia, with the character of proconsul, he chose to lodge the first night in the house of Polemon the celebrated sophist, which was the best and largest in Smyrna: but the proud and brutal sophist, who was then in the country, returning home about midnight, and finding the proconsul in his house, instead of thanking him for the honour he had done him, made such com-

plaints of the liberty he had taken, that Antoninus, to appease him, was obliged to leave the house at that time of night, and seek for a lodging elsewhere. However, when Antoninus was raised to the empire, Polemon came to Rome to pay his respects to him. The emperor received him in a most obliging manner, and ordered him to be lodged in the palace; but reminded him, at the same time,

*What
prompted
Adrian to
adopt him.*

T. Antoninus was adopted by Adrian, as we have related above, upon the death of Ælius Verus Cæsar. Some authors write, that Adrian was induced to prefer him to so many other great men, by the particular respect, and tender regard, which Antoninus shewed to his father-in-law, whom, as he was very old and decrepit, he used constantly to conduct to the senate, attending him like a slave: Adrian, seeing him one day leading and supporting the old man, was so pleased with the sight, that he adopted him for that very reason¹. But Adrian could not by this alone be induced to confer so great an honour upon one who had given so many proofs of his extraordinary talents and ability. He chose him, therefore, because he judged him to be the best qualified for the sovereign power². He was adopted on the twenty-fifth of February of the year 139, and at the same time invested with the proconsular and tribunitial power, honoured with the name of Cæsar, now peculiar to the presumptive heir of the empire, and distinguished, as we conjecture from some ancient coins, with the title of emperor, which had hitherto been given to the

¹ Jul. Cap. p. 17, 18.

² Dio, lib. lxxix. p. 796, 797.

time, of what had passed at Smyrna, by ordering his domestics to take care, that no one turned him out of his apartment (2). A comedian complaining to the emperor, that Polemon had driven him out of the theatre at mid-day, Antoninus answered, "He drove me out of my lodgings at midnight, and nevertheless I made no complaints." The emperor going one day to see the fine house of Valerius Omulus, and admiring, amongst other things, certain pillars of porphyry, he asked him, where he had purchased them. But Omulus, instead of being pleased to see the emperor take notice of the ornaments of his house, returned this rude answer, "In other people's houses you must learn to be deaf and dumb (3).

Having sent for Apollonius the celebrated Stoic, who resided at Chalcis in Syria, to instruct M. Aurelius in the principles of that sect, the philosopher flew to Rome, attended by a great number of disciples. Upon their arrival Antoninus invited Apollonius to court, in order to deliver his disciple to him. The haughty pedant answered with great insolence, that the master was not to come to the disciple, but the disciple to the master; which words being related to Antoninus, "Does Apollonius then (said he, smiling), think it a more troublesome journey from his lodgings to the palace, than from Chalcis to Rome? However, he ordered M. Aurelius to wait upon him.

(2) Philof. Soph. p. 25.

(3) Jul. Cap. p. 18-23.

sovereign alone (X). Adrian adopted Antoninus upon condition that he should adopt M. Annius Verus the son of his wife's brother, and L. Commodus the son of L. Verus Cæsar; which he did accordingly, before the death of Adrian, probably the same day on which he himself was adopted *.

Antoninus returned the emperor thanks in the senate for the honour he had conferred upon him, distributed large sums among the soldiery and populace, expending his own, and not the public money; and besides performed the promises which had been made to them by Adrian. All the cities of the empire used, on such occasions, to present the adopted prince with sums of money instead of crowns, which were thence called aurum coronarium. These sums Antoninus remitted entirely to the cities of Italy, and a moiety to all the rest. He even contributed, out of his private fortune, a great deal towards the works which Adrian was carrying on, and obeyed that prince, while he lived, with as much respect and submission as did the meanest of his subjects, except when he attempted to murder himself, or others. Adrian dying at Baize, on the tenth of July, as has been before observed, Antoninus prevailed upon the senate to confer such honours upon him as had been decreed to the best of emperors; and continued all those in their employments, who had been preferred by him. It was, according to some writers, on account of this tender and filial respect for the memory of his father, that the senate decreed him the glorious surname of Pius; others think, that they distinguished him with that title in reward of the great tenderness he testified for his father-in-law in his old age, or of Adrian in his sickness, or because he preserved many whom Adrian had commanded to be murdered; or, finally, on account of the natural sweetness

His generosity.

He causes Adrian to be ranked among the gods.

* Spart. in Adr. p. 12.

(X) We are told, that his succession to the empire was prefigured long before by many omens. While he governed part of Italy in quality of proconsul, one from among the crowd cried out to him, while he was administering justice, "May the gods prosper your undertakings, Augustus." Upon his arrival in Asia, the priests of the city of Tralles in Lydia received him not with the usual salutation, "Ave, proconsul! Hail, proconsul!" but styled him emperor. At Cyzicus, a crown belonging to the statue of one of the gods was found upon that of Antoninus (4), &c.

(4) Jul. Capit. p. 8.

of

*Honours
conferred
upon him
by the
senate.*

of his temper, and the extraordinary respect he shewed for religion and religious persons^x. It is certain, however, that he bears the epithet of Pius in several medals of this year, and is chiefly known by it in history^y. Pausanias thinks he deserved not only this title, but that likewise which was bestowed on Cyrus, namely, the Father of Mankind, in consideration of the paternal care he seemed to take of all men. Commodus, and the emperors who succeeded him, assumed the same title; which served only to render their wickedness the more conspicuous. This year Antoninus was likewise honoured with the title of Augustus, and of High Pontiff, and his wife Faustina with that of Augusta. He refused many other honours which the senate offered him, and, among the rest, the title of the Father of his Country; which, however, he accepted in the course of the following year^z.

We know but very little of the actions of this great prince, and are almost as ignorant of the order of time, with respect to what has reached us. Julius Capitolinus, who wrote his life, and inscribed it to the emperor Diocletian, is but a very indifferent historian, and greatly perplexed in his narration. What Dio Cassius wrote of Antoninus has been lost eight hundred years since, and consequently before Xiphilin undertook the abridging that author; so that we can only give our readers a general idea of this excellent prince's government and conduct. He lived, according to Julius Capitolinus, after his accession to the empire, in the same manner as he had done when he was a private person; no alteration appeared in his behaviour towards his friends, nor had any of his enemies ever the least reason to be grieved for his preferment. He would suffer none but slaves to wait upon him, shewing on all occasions the greatest respect for the equestrian and senatorial orders. He never transacted any business of consequence without the advice of the senate, shewing them, when emperor, that regard which he desired to see paid to them by other emperors while he was a senator. He frequently gave an account, even to the people, of all his actions and negotiations. When he demanded the consulship, or other employments, either for himself or his children, he appeared like a private person among the other candidates. M. Aurelius owns, that Antoninus convinced him by his example, that a prince might lead a private life even in a court.

^x Jul. Cap. p. 17. Pausan. lib. viii. p. 275. Dio, lib. lxx. p. 799.
^y Spanh. lib. viii. p. 714. ^z Goltz, p. 71.

He reduced most of the imposts and tributes, and strictly enjoined his receivers and collectors to exact them without any severity or oppression, saying, that he chose rather to be poor than have his coffers filled at the expence of an oppressed people. He was no sooner raised to the empire, than he disposed of the greatest part of his private estate in favour of the indigent citizens; and the empress Faustina repining at his generosity, he told her, that a prince ought to have no private interest, no private property, and nothing in view but the public welfare. He appointed for governors of provinces such only as were persons of known integrity, and is said never to have preferred an undeserving man to any employment whatsoever. Hence some continued in their posts during the whole time of his reign; for he would not remove those who discharged their offices to the satisfaction of the people. Gavius Maximus was for the space of twenty years captain of the prætorian guards; and others held their employments during the whole time of his reign. His paternal estate, which was very great, he laid out in bounties and largesses; but was very sparing of the public money: whence at his death his own coffers were found empty, but the treasury full. He deprived several useless persons of the pensions settled upon them by Adrian, saying, he could not bear to see the state impoverished by those who were not serviceable to it, but lived in idleness upon the labours of others. Though he was sparing of the public money, yet no one ever charged him with avarice; for he gave daily instances of an unbounded generosity.

*He lessens
the tri-
butes.*

*Prefers
only men
of merit.*

He would accept of no legacies from such as had children, and ordered the estates of criminals condemned for extortion, to be restored to their heirs, after the persons, whom they had pillaged, had been fully satisfied. Under no prince fewer estates were confiscated, than under him. He extirpated the whole tribe of informers, and was ready, upon the least misfortune that happened to any city or province, to lessen their tribute or taxes^a. Many obtained the privileges of Roman citizens for themselves, and not for their children, who, in that case, remained Greeks, according to the expression of an ancient historian, and consequently were incapable of enjoying their fathers' estates, which fell to the treasury, if the deceased had no Roman citizen amongst his relations. This regulation, favourable indeed to the avarice of princes, but repugnant to humanity, Antoninus utterly abolished^b. He bestowed great privileges and salaries, in all the provinces of the empire,

*Instances
of his
equity.*

^a Jul. Cap. p. 20—50.

^b Pausan. lib. viii. p. 273.

upon

*Favours
men of
learning.*

upon such men of learning as undertook the education of youth; maintained incredible numbers of children, whose parents were indigent; supplied the senators and magistrates with money, to defray the expences of their necessary journeys; and spent considerable sums in shews and spectacles, complying in that particular with the inclinations of the people, though he himself disliked such diversions.

*His public
works.*

Though he was not addicted to building, yet he raised a great number of stately edifices at Rome, and in the neighbourhood. He caused a port to be made at Caieta, now Gaeta, repaired that of Terracina, finished Adrian's magnificent mausoleum, built a stately palace at Lorium, in Hetruria, about ten miles from Rome, in which place he had been educated; and contributed large sums towards repairing several ancient buildings in Greece, Ionia, Syria, and Africa. On the village of Pallantium, in Arcadia, he bestowed the privileges of a city, and exempted it from all manner of tribute, because Evander was supposed to have built, and peopled with the inhabitants of that village, a city in the place where Rome stood^c. He promised, in the beginning of his reign, to spill the blood of no senator; which promise he observed so religiously, that one being convicted of parricide, he contented himself with banishing him, even after he had owned his crime. Attilius Tattianus and Priscianus being accused of conspiring against the life of the emperor, the latter destroyed himself, and the former was only banished: of his son, Antoninus took particular care, and brought him up as if he had been his own child. He would suffer no enquiry to be made after their accomplices, answering the senate, when they pressed him to it, "I do not care the world should know by how many persons I am hated." He never engaged in any war which he could avoid, and was often heard to say, that he had rather save one citizen than destroy a thousand enemies.

*Is esteemed
even by the
enemies of
Rome.*

By this conduct he gained the affections, not only of his own people, who revered him as their father and protector, but likewise of the declared enemies of Rome, who entertained such an opinion of his equity, justice, and moderation, that, in their disputes, they chose him for their judge and arbitrator; and indeed no Roman emperor was ever more esteemed and revered by all foreign nations, than Antoninus. The king of the Parthians, having raised a formidable army, and invaded Armenia, retired, contrary to the expectation of all, and disbanded his troops, upon the receipt

^c Jul. Cap. p. 17—20. Pausan. lib. viii. p. 273.

of a letter from Antoninus. The kings of Hyrcania, Bactria, and India, sent ambassadors to him, courting his friendship and alliance. Pharasmanes, king of Iberia, came in person to wait upon him at Rome, and shewed much greater respect and veneration for him than he had formerly done for Adrian. The Lazi, the Armenians, the Quadi, and several other nations, readily received such princes as he was pleased to appoint over them, though they were not then subject to the empire ^d. Antoninus is by some historians compared, by others even preferred, to Numa, on account of the tranquility which Rome enjoyed during the greatest part of his reign, and his extraordinary care of all things belonging to the worship of the gods, and to religion.

Adrian died, as we have related before, on the tenth of July, 139, Camerinus and Niger being consuls. These were succeeded by the emperor Antoninus, the second time consul, and Caius Bruttius Præfens. This year Antoninus gave his daughter Annia Faustina in marriage to M. Aurelius, whom he created Cæsar, and, at the request of the senate, though this year only quæstor, named for the consulate the year ensuing; which he discharged as his colleague. The succeeding consuls were M. Peducæus Syloga and T. Hoenius Severus ^e, during whose administration one Celsus rebelled; but all we know of his revolt is, that on this occasion the empress Faustina was greatly displeased with the kindness which the clement emperor shewed to his enemies ^f. Soon after, Faustina died, and was, notwithstanding the dissolute life she had led, at the request of Antoninus, honoured with divine worship, priests, temples, statues of gold and silver. Games were instituted to her honour, and her statue was, by Antoninus's order, carried amongst those of the other gods at the Circensian sports. The emperor was not unacquainted with her irregular conduct; but had done all that lay in his power to keep her disorders concealed from the public ^g.

Marries his daughter Faustina to M. Aurelius.

The empress Faustina dies, and is ranked among the gods.

In the following year, Lucius Cuspius Rufinus and Lucius Statius Quadratus being consuls, Antoninus instituted solemn sports at Puteoli, in honour of Adrian, which were styled Pia and Pialia, and were to be celebrated the second year of each Olympiad. The next consuls were C. Belliscus Torquatus and Tiberius Claudius Atticus Herodes. In the following consulship of Lollianus Avitus and Claudius Maximus, the Brigantines in Britain revolted; but

Atticus Herodes is raised to the consulship.

^d Birg. p. 194. Spart. lib. ix. p. 831, 832. ^e Cuspin. p. 353. Onuph. in Fast. p. 425. ^f Coll. Vit. per Vuleat. p. 43. ^g Jul. Cap. p. 18.

The Brigantes revolt, and are reduced.

were soon reduced by Lollius Urbicus, governor of that province, who deprived them of great part of their country, subdued the more northern nations, and built a wall between the friths of Forth and Clyde^b. For the victories gained by Lollius, Antoninus was honoured, as appears from some ancient medals, with the title of Britannicus¹. Next year Antoninus entered upon his fourth consulship, having for his colleague M. Aurelius Cæsar, the second time consul, and gave the manly robe to Lucius Verus his adopted son, who had completed the fourteenth year of his age on the fifteenth of December of the preceding year. The same year Antoninus consecrated the temple which he had built to the honour of Adrian, and on that occasion distributed considerable sums among the populace^k. In the next consulship of Sex. Erucius Clarus and Cn. Claudius Severus, some disturbances were raised in Germany and Dacia; but were soon appeased by the governors of those provinces. The Alani likewise, attempting to invade the Roman dominions, were driven back into their own country with considerable loss^l.

Shews a great esteem for M. Aurelius;

but none for L. Verus.

During the administration of the following consuls Largus and Messalinus, the emperor invested M. Aurelius with the tribunitial and proconsular power. By Faustina, the daughter of Antoninus, he had already a daughter named Lucilla, who was afterwards married to L. Verus. The emperor on all occasions shewed a particular esteem for M. Aurelius, consulted him in every affair of consequence, often followed his advice, and suffered him to govern as if he had been his partner in the sovereign power, despising the malicious insinuations of those who attempted to estrange his mind from the young prince, as if he wished for his death. As the conduct of L. Verus was very different from that of M. Aurelius, the emperor treated him in a quite different manner. He did not bestow upon him the title of Cæsar, or any other peculiar to the apparent heir of the empire; nor did the emperor, during the whole time of his reign, invest him with any power whatever; a plain indication, that he disliked him, not without reason, as we shall see hereafter.

In the consulate of Torquatus and Julianus, the Moors took up arms, upon what provocation we know not; but were soon defeated, driven out of their own country, and obliged to shelter themselves in the most distant parts of Libya beyond Mount Atlas^m. The three following years

^b Vide Alford. Annal. Britan. ad an. 142.

¹ Spart. p. 50.

^k Jul. Cap. p. 36.

^l Ibid. p. 19—24.

^m Pausan.

lib. viii. p. 273.

were

were quite barren of events. In the first, Servius Scipio Orfitus and Q. Nonius Priscus were consuls; in the second, Glabrio Gallicanus and Vetus; and, in the third, Quintilius Condianus and Quintilius Maximus: the two latter were brothers, and are greatly extolled by the ancients, on account of their learning, their experience both in civil and military affairs, their wealth, and, above all, for their mutual unity and concord; for they acted on all occasions, says Dio Cassius, as if they had not been two, but one person; whence they are known in history by the name of the Quintilii^a. They governed the provinces conjointly, the one being lieutenant to the other; were consuls together; wrote to the emperor, received answers, judged causes, published books, in common; and were in the end unjustly condemned and executed together, by order of the emperor Commodus, as we shall relate in the history of that prince's reign. They were natives of Troas, and highly esteemed by M. Aurelius, under whom they governed Greece in 173, and Pannonia in 178. They published a treatise on agriculture, of which some fragments have reached our times^b.

The two brothers Quintilii.

In the following year, the fifteenth of Antoninus's reign, Sextus Junius Glabrio and C. Omullus Verianus being consuls, Justin the Martyr published his first Apology, and presented it to the emperor, to his adopted sons, and to the senate. As Antoninus was a prince of a merciful disposition, he was so far moved by it, and by the informations which he had received from other parts of the empire, that he addressed a letter to the whole province of Asia in favour of the distressed Christians, which he concluded with these words: "If any one for the future shall molest the Christians, and accuse them merely on account of their religion, let the person who is arraigned be discharged, though he is found to be a Christian, and the accuser be punished according to the rigour of the law^c." At the same time the emperor wrote in behalf of the Christians to the Athenians, Theffalonians, Larisseans in Theffaly, and to all the Greeks. These letters put a stop to the persecution, which, however, broke out, and raged with great violence, under Marcus Aurelius.

Antoninus favourable to the Christians.

Next year, when C. Bruttius Præfens and A. Junius Rufinus were consuls, the Tiber, overflowing its banks, laid the lower parts of Rome under water. The inundation was followed by a fire, which consumed part of the city, and

*Yr. of Fl. 2503.
A. D. 155.
U. C. 903.*

Several calamities.

^a Dio, lib. lxxi. p. 814. Casaub. in Spart. p. 94. Philost. Soph. 27. ^b Vide Casaub. in Spart. p. 94. ^c Euseb. lib. iv. cap. 26. Just. Apol. p. 100. Chron. Alex. p. 608, 610.

a famine, which swept off great numbers of the citizens, notwithstanding the care which the emperor took to have corn conveyed to the city from the most distant provinces. The same year the cities of Narbonne in Gaul, and Antioch in Syria, and the great square at Carthage, were in great part consumed by fire; but soon restored by Antoninus to their former splendor². This year L. Verus discharged the office of quæstor, and exhibited on that occasion public shews, at which he presided, sitting between Antoninus and M. Aurelius. The following year he was raised to the consulship, and had for his colleague T. Sextius, or, as he is called by others, Sextilius Lateranus. C. Julius Severus and M. Rufinus Sabinianus, discharged that office next, and were succeeded by M. Ceionius Silvanus and C. Serius Augurinus, during whose consulship the cities of Cos and Rhodes, with several others in Lycia and Caria, were overturned by a violent earthquake; but soon restored to their former lustre, Antoninus contributing very considerable sums, to repair the losses which the inhabitants had sustained¹. The four following years are quite barren of events: the consuls were Barbarus and Regulus; Tertullus and Sacerdos; Plautius Quintillus and M. Statius Priscus; Appius Annius Bradua and T. Vibius Bradus. The two latter were succeeded by M. Aurelius Cæsar the third time, and L. Verus the second time consul.

Yr. of Fl.

2511.

A. D. 163.

U. C. 911.

*Is taken
ill, and
dies.*

During their administration, the emperor was seized with a violent fever at Lorium, one of his country-seats; which in a few days terminated his life on the seventh of March, after he had lived seventy-three years, five months, and sixteen or seventeen days, and reigned twenty-two years, seven months, and twenty-six days. When he found death approaching, he sent for the captains of the prætorian guards, and the chief officers of the court, and in their presence confirmed his adoption of M. Aurelius, and recommended the empire to his care and attention, without taking the least notice of Lucius Verus. He then ordered the golden image of Fortune, which always stood in the emperor's bedchamber, to be removed to the room of M. Aurelius. When the tribune came for the parole, the word he delivered was Equanimity. He left his paternal estate to his daughter, and legacies to all his friends and domestics. Though he died in an advanced age, he was no less lamented by all the subjects of the empire than if he had been snatched from them in the bloom of youth. His funeral was performed with the utmost pomp and magnifi-

*He is uni-
versally
lamented.*

¹ Jul. Cap. p. 20. Vict. Epit.² Jul. Cap. p. 21, 22.

cence, and his body deposited in the pompous mausoleum of his predecessor Adrian; on which occasion two funeral orations were pronounced, one by M. Aurelius, and another by L. Verus. He was by the senate ranked among the gods; a temple was built to his honour; priests, sacrifices, and annual sports were instituted (Y).

M. Au-

(Y) The writers that flourished in his reign were Justin, Julius Paulus, Appian, Callinicus Sutorius, Calvisius Taurus, Apollonius, Ptolemy the astrologer, Fronto, Telephus, and Claudius Maximus. Justin is thought to have inscribed his abridgment of Trogus Pompeius to the emperor Antoninus Pius. Trogus Pompeius is ranked among the best historians of Augustus's reign, and put upon a level with Livy, Sallust, and Tacitus (1). Julius Paulus published several poetical pieces, and is commended by Aulus Gellius, on account of his great erudition and probity. He lived in Gellius's time; but died before that grammarian began to write: whence he is thought to have flourished under Adrian and Antoninus (2). Appian, who wrote the Roman history in Greek, was a native of Alexandria, pleaded some time at Rome, and was afterwards employed by the emperors to take care of their private estates and revenues (3). He lived in the reigns of Trajan, Adrian, and Antoninus, and was writing in the year 900 of Rome, the tenth of Adrian's reign (4).

His Roman history is, properly speaking, a separate and distinct history of all the nations subject to Rome, from the earliest times to the reign of Augustus, though he sometimes carries it down to the time of Adrian (5). His history of the wars of Africa, Syria, Parthia, Pontus, Iberia, Spain, Illyricum, and of Hannibal and Mithridates, with five books of the civil wars, of which he wrote seven, have reached us; and, besides, some fragments of several other histories copied by M. Valois from the collections of Constantine Porphyrogenitus. He likewise wrote the history of the wars of Judæa, and of that which Trajan waged with the Dacians (6). Photius admires the elegance of his style; but chiefly commends him as an impartial writer, and one who, in his accounts, aimed mostly at truth (7). Callinicus Sutorius was a native of Petra in Arabia; but spent most part of his life at Athens. He wrote the history of Alexandria in ten books, quoted by St. Jerom (8), and published several other pieces on various subjects (9). Calvisius Taurus is often mentioned by Aulus Gellius, who went to

(1) Voff. Hist. Lat. cap. 19, & 23. (2) Aul. Gel. lib. i. cap. 22. lib. v. cap. 4. lib. xvi. cap. 10. lib. xix. cap. 7. Voff. Poet. Lat. p. 52. (3) Appian. in Syr. Suid. p. 353. (4) Appian. p. 7. (5) Idem. p. 4. Evagr. lib. vi. cap. 24. (6) Appian. in Syr. p. 10. Phot. cap. 57. (7) Phot. ibid. (8) Hier. in Dan. (9) Suid. p. 1360.

Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, surnamed the Philosopher.

M. Aurelius is, by the ancients, reckoned the best prince that ever governed the empire, and his reign commonly styled the Golden Age; for he verified the saying which he had borrowed of Plato, and had often in his mouth, that states would be happy when princes were philoso-

hear him while he instructed the Athenian youth in the principles of the Platonic philosophy (1). He published several works, one among the rest, shewing the difference between the doctrine of Plato, and that of Aristotle. Aulus Gellius quotes a treatise written by him on anger, and the first book of his comments upon Plato's Gorgias (2). Te-lephus, who instructed L. Verus in the Greek tongue, was born in Pergamus, and wrote a book on the rhetoric of Homer; another on the perfect agreement between that poet and Plato; the lives of such poets as had written comedies and tragedies; instructions on the choice of books; a description of Pergamus, with the history of its kings and laws; an account of the laws and customs of Athens; and a collection of epithets (3). Claudius Maximus was by birth a Tyrian, and one of M. Aurelius's preceptors, whom he instructed in the principles of the Stoics. He published several philosophical pieces, and discourses on the Platonic philosophy, which have reached our times, and are deservedly esteemed by the learned. We have already mentioned Apollonius the Stoic, who was another of M. Aurelius's preceptors, and whom that prince went

frequently to hear, even after he was raised to the empire. Ptolemy, the celebrated astrologer and geographer, flourished under Adrian and Antoninus. Suidas writes, that he was born in Alexandria; but Vossius maintains, that he was a native of Pelusium, and supposed to have been an Alexandrian, because he made his astronomical observations in that city (4). Sulpitius Apollinaris, a celebrated grammarian, is often mentioned by Aulus Gellius, who seems to have entertained a great opinion of him (5). Some of his observations upon Terence have reached our times (6). M. Cornelius Fronto is extolled by the ancients, as one of the best orators of his age, and by some compared with Cicero. Aulus Gellius tells us, that he never visited him, which he did frequently while he was very young, without profiting much by his instructions (7). In Adrian's time he was esteemed the most eloquent orator of that age, and was afterwards appointed by Antoninus to instruct M. Aurelius and L. Verus in Latin eloquence. M. Aurelius valued him above all his preceptors, caused a statue to be erected to him in Rome, and honoured him with the consular dignity (8).

(1) Aul. Gel. lib. xviii. cap. 10.

(2) Ibid. lib. i. cap. 26, lib. vi.

cap. 14.

(3) Suid. p. 897.

(4) Voss. Hist. Græc. lib. iv. cap. 17.

(5) Aul. Gel. lib. iv. cap. 17, lib. xiii. cap. 17, &c.

(6) Vide

Calvis. an. 163, (7) Gel. lib. ii. cap. 26.

(8) Jul. Cap. in Aurel.

p. 23.

phers'. He was of the Annian family, which some writers derive from Numa Pompilius. However that be, it is certain, that his great-grandfather, Annius Verus, originally of Succubæ, a city of Bætica in Spain, was the first senator of the Annian family, and afterwards created prætor. His son was raised by Vespasian to the rank of a patrician, appointed governor of Rome, and honoured twice with the consulship. He had three children, Annius Verus, the father of M. Aurelius; Annius Libo, who was consul; and Annia Galeria Faustina, who was married to the emperor Antoninus Pius. Annius Verus married Domitia Calvilla, called also Lucilla, the daughter of Calvisius Tullus, who had been twice consul, and had by her M. Aurelius, and a daughter named Annia Cornificia. M. Aurelius was born in Rome, during his grandfather's second consulship, on the 26th of April, in the year 121. His first name was Catilius Severus, that of his mother's grandfather, who had been governor of Rome and twice consul. Upon the death of his father, who died in his prætorship, he was adopted by his grandfather, M. Annius Verus, and assumed his name. The emperor Adrian used to call him M. Annius Verissimus, on account of his great sincerity; and, under that name, Justin the Martyr addresses him in his second Apology. When he was adopted by Antoninus, he took the names of M. Ælius Aurelius Verus, the appellation of Aurelius being peculiar to the family of Antoninus, and that of Ælius to the family of Adrian, into which Antoninus had been adopted. Upon his accession to the empire he transferred the name of Verus to L. Commodus, his brother by adoption, and took for himself that of Antoninus; but is generally distinguished from his predecessor, either by the prænomen of Marcus, or the surname of Philosophus; which was given him by the unanimous consent of historians, and not by any public act or decree of the senate.

His extraction. pre-ferment.

He was from his tender years brought up by the emperor Adrian, whom Dio Cassius calls his kinsman. That prince would have willingly adopted, and appointed him his successor; but chose in his room, as he was then too young, T. Antoninus, who had married his aunt, obliging him to adopt his nephew. Annius Verus, his grandfather, committed the care of his education, while he was an infant, to a matron, who lived in his house; but M. Aurelius thanks the gods that he was but a short while under her

His education.

* Dio, lib. lxxi. p. 815. Jul. Cap. in M. Aur. p. 33. † Dio, lib. lxxix. p. 797. Jul. Cap. in M. Aur. Justin. Apol. ii. Grut. p. 300.

*His studies
and learning.*

tuition^u; for Adrian, taking him from his grandfather, brought him up in the palace, employing the greatest men of that age to instruct him in every branch of literature. He applied himself to the study of philosophy under the celebrated sophist Apollonius Sextus of Chæronea, Plutarch's nephew, Junius Rusticus, Claudius Maximus, Cincia Catullus, and Claudius Severus; to that of eloquence under Herodes Atticus, and M. Cornelius Fronto; and to the study of the law under L. Volusius Metianus, or, as some style him, Mæcianus, the most learned civilian of that age. M. Aurelius is said to have excelled in all these branches of learning, and to have been one of the greatest orators, philosophers, and civilians, of his time. He delighted chiefly in the study of philosophy, and was thoroughly acquainted with the tenets and principles of the different sects. When he was but twelve years old, he entered himself among the philosophers, wore their habit, and practised all their austerities, lying on the ground, fasting, and abstaining from several kinds of meat. He shewed, even after he was emperor, great respect to those who had instructed him, especially to Junius Rusticus, of whom we have spoken in our notes; transacted nothing without his advice; saluted him always before the captains of the guards; raised him twice to the consulship; and, after his death, prevailed upon the senate to decree him a statue. He expressed no less gratitude and veneration towards his other masters, keeping in his closet their images in gold, visiting frequently their sepulchres, and adorning them with crowns, victims, and flowers.

*His respect
to his pre-
ceptors.*

*Practises
the auste-
rities of
the philo-
sophers.*

*His aver-
sion to
shows and
all diver-
sions.*

His great application to the study of philosophy, and the austerities he practised, impaired his health to such a degree, that he became very weak and infirm, though naturally of a robust constitution^v. As he led a very regular life, he lived, notwithstanding his bad health, almost to the age of sixty, and performed great things, applying himself to the dispatch of business with great care and assiduity. He had a great dislike to all sorts of shews, sports, and diversions, being naturally grave and serious; but nevertheless appeared at them sometimes, that he might not seem to condemn those who frequented them. He used, while he was emperor, to read, write, or talk to his ministers about public affairs, during the whole time of the sports; for which practice he was often rallied by the populace, but despised their sarcasms^x. When he was but sixteen he

^v M. Aur. de seip. lib. i. cap. 14.
M. Anton. lib. i. cap. 3.

^v Jul. Cap. in M. Aur.
^x Jul. Cap. p. 23.

made over his paternal estate to his sister, saying, that his grandfather's estate was enough for him. Adrian adopted Antoninus Pius, upon condition that he should adopt M. Aurelius, at that time eighteen years old, and L. Commodus, who was only in the seventh or eighth year of his age, but already Adrian's grandson by adoption, being the son of L. Ælius Cæsar. M. Aurelius was so far from being elated with his new dignity, that, on the contrary, he could not help betraying great uneasiness and concern, telling those who came to congratulate him upon his promotion, that they knew not how difficult and dangerous a thing it was to command¹. Adrian had betrothed to him, when he was but fifteen, the daughter of L. Verus Cæsar, named, as is commonly believed, Fabia; and appointed, that Antoninus should bestow his daughter, Annia Faustina, on young Lucius. But, upon the death of Adrian, Antoninus proposed a match between his daughter and M. Aurelius, who agreed to it, married her some years after, and had a daughter by her named Lucilla, who was wedded to L. Verus in 164, and afterwards to Pompeianus (Z).

Antoninus having declared M. Aurelius his successor, and recommended to him the empire and his daughter, in the presence of the chief officers of the court, the senate, as soon as he expired, obliged M. Aurelius to accept the sovereignty, and take upon him the management of affairs, without even mentioning L. Verus, who was likewise the son of Antoninus by adoption, but very different in his temper and conduct both from his father and brother. He was entirely abandoned to debauchery, and more inclined to tread in the footsteps of Nero and Caligula than to imitate the virtues of T. Antoninus and M. Aurelius². Antoninus, well acquainted with his temper, had never invested him with any power, nor even conferred upon him the title of Cæsar. However, M. Aurelius immediately declared him

¹ Jul. Cap. p. 24. ² Jul. Cap. in M. Aur. p. 25. & in Ver. p. 36.

(Z) He had several other daughters by her, of whom three were alive in the year 193, and one was put to death by Caracalla in 212. Annia Faustina brought him likewise several sons, to wit, Commodus, who was afterwards emperor, Antoninus Geminus, Severus, or rather Verus, styled, on some medals, Annius Verus, T. Aurelius Antoninus, and T. Ælius Aurelius. Commodus and Antoninus Geminus were twins (1).

(1) Jul. Cap. in Aur. & in L. Ver. p. 39. Herodian. lib. i. p. 46. & lib. iv. p. 546.

not

*He takes
L. Verus
for his
partner in
the sove-
reignty.*

not only Cæsar, but Augustus, and his partner in the sovereign power; so that Rome saw herself, for the first time, governed by two sovereigns. As they were at the same time consuls, this year, the 163d of the Christian æra, is distinguished in the fasti, and inscriptions, by the consulate of the two Augusti^a. Aurelius, in raising Lucius to the empire, gave him the name of Verus; so that he was henceforth called Lucius Verus, instead of Lucius Commodus: he added that of Antoninus, which he himself assumed, whence he is styled, in most ancient inscriptions, M. Aurelius Antoninus^b. The two emperors proceeded from the senate to the camp of the prætorian guards, where they promised the soldiers a bounty of twenty thousand sesterces, M. Aurelius speaking for both. They performed afterwards, with great pomp, the funeral of their deceased father, caused him to be ranked among the gods, and instituted a new college of priests, called Aureliani, or Aurelian priests. They both governed with great mildness and unity, Lucius conducting himself rather as Aurelius's lieutenant than his partner in the sovereignty. Their administration was such, that no one had occasion to regret the loss of Antoninus, whose just measures were pursued by both princes. That their union might be the more lasting, M. Aurelius betrothed his daughter Lucilla to L. Verus; and on that solemnity both princes added a great number of children to those who were supplied with corn at the public expence.

*They both
govern
with great
mildness
and unanimity.*

*Many calamities
happen in
the beginning
of
their
reign.*

But the tranquility and happiness, which Rome and the whole empire enjoyed under the two sovereigns, was soon interrupted by a dreadful inundation of the Tiber, which happened in the beginning of the following year, when Rusticus and Aquilinus were consuls: it overturned many private houses and public buildings in the city, carried away great numbers of people and cattle, and laid under water the neighbouring country to a great distance. This inundation was followed by earthquakes, conflagrations in several provinces, and a general infection of the air, which produced an infinite number of insects, that destroyed what the flood had spared, and occasioned a famine in Rome. These calamities were in great measure alleviated by the care and presence of the two emperors, who, at their own expence, supplied the distressed city with corn, and made good the losses sustained by individuals^c. At the same time the Parthian war broke out, the Catti

^a Arift. Orat. xvi. p. 421.
Cap. p. 25.

^b Vide Goltz, p. 34.

^c Jul.

made irruptions into Germany and Rhætia, and the Britons began to revolt. Calpurnius Agricola was dispatched against the latter, and Aufidius Victorinus took the field against the Catti; but it was thought proper that L. Verus should march in person against the Parthians, while M. Aurelius continued at Rome, where his presence was judged necessary. The good emperor was not displeased to have such a specious pretence for removing his colleague from Rome, hoping that a warlike life would give him a distaste to the idle amusements and debaucheries of the town; but he was greatly disappointed, as we shall see hereafter. What success attended Agricola and Victorinus we are not here told. All we know of the wars with these nations is, that Didius Julianus, who reigned after Pertinax, is said to have overcome the Chauci, and likewise the Catti, who had made inroads into the Roman dominions. The war in Britain must have likewise lasted a long time; for it was not ended eight years after, when that of the Marcomanni broke out ^d.

As for the Parthians, they were at this time governed by Vologeses, probably the son of Cosroes, who reigned in the times of Trajan and Adrian. Antoninus had refused to restore the golden throne, which had been seized by Adrian. This refusal perhaps occasioned the war; for, before Antoninus died, the Parthian had made great preparations, and, soon after his death, appeared in the field at the head of a formidable army ^e. Great disturbances, of which we find but a very confused account in the ancients, happened likewise at this time in Armenia, raised, in all likelihood, and fomented, by the king of Parthia. Sohemus king of Armenia was driven from the throne, and the king of the Henochii, a people dwelling between the Caspian and Euxine seas, was killed by a petty prince, named Tiridates, who was afterwards taken prisoner by the Romans, and by M. Aurelius confined to Britain ^f. Severinus, a native of Gaul, and governor of Cappadocia, having entered Armenia at the head of several legions, was attacked by the Parthians near a place called Elegia, and cut off with all his troops: we are told, that not a single person of the whole army escaped the general slaughter. Dio Cassius ascribes the victory to Vologeses; but he obtained it by the valour of Osrhoes, or, as Lucian calls him, Othryades, who commanded the army, and was, in all likelihood, some prince of the royal family

The Parthians declare war.

Disturbances in Armenia.

A whole Roman army cut off by the Parthians.

^d Spart. in Julian. p. 60. lib. lxxi. p. 302.

^e Arist. Orat. ix. p. 119.

^f Dio,

of Parthia, on whom Vologeses intended to bestow the crown of Armenia².

*Vologeses
king of the
Parthians
invades
Syria.*

Vologeses, elated with this victory, entered Syria at the head of a very numerous army, committing dreadful ravages both in that province and in Cappadocia, which he likewise invaded, after having defeated Attidius Cornelianus, who commanded in Syria. Against so formidable an

*L. Verus
goes into
the East.*

enemy, it was judged proper, that one of the emperors should march in person; and accordingly L. Verus departed from Rome this year for Syria. M. Aurelius accompanied him to Capua, whence he was scarce returned to Rome, when he was informed, that his colleague had been

*His de-
baucheries
on the road.*

seized at Canosa with a violent distemper, occasioned by the debaucheries and disorders to which he had abandoned himself on the road: for the luxurious prince, instead of pursuing his march with all possible expedition, to save Syria, which was over-run by the Parthians, and ready to revolt from Rome, loitered in all the cities in his route, spending his time in banquets and revels, and plunging himself into the most infamous debaucheries. Upon the

*He abandons him-
self to all
manner of
pleasures,
and suffers
his lieutenants to
carry on
the war.*

news of his illness, M. Aurelius caused vows and sacrifices to be offered for his recovery, and took a second journey to see him. When he began to recover, M. Aurelius returned to Rome; and L. Verus soon after pursued his journey, passing over into Greece, and from thence into Asia, Pamphylia, and Cilicia. As he stopped in every place that could afford him any kind of diversion, he arrived, when the year was already far advanced, in Syria; and, choosing Antioch for the place of his residence, abandoned himself to all manner of lewdness and debauchery, while the officers, who commanded under him, carried on the war. These were Statius Priscus, Avidius Cassius, Martius Verus, Saturninus, Fronto, and Tatianus, all persons of great experience, and esteemed the best commanders of that age. As for the emperor Verus, he was so ingrossed with his pleasures and diversions, that, though the war lasted four years, he never once appeared at the head of his army, which consisted of the flower of the Roman troops; but wallowed in all manner of lewdness at Antioch, Daphne, and Laodicea, while his officers were signalizing themselves in the field³. All we know of this war is, that many great exploits were performed in Armenia, Syria, Mesopotamia, Media, and upon the banks of the Tygris⁴; that the Ro-

² Lucian. Pseud. p. 485. & Hist. p. 347.

³ Jul. Cap. in M. Aur. p. 26. & in Ver. p. 37. Philost. Soph. 27. Dio, in Excerpt. Val. p. 775. & lib. lxxi. p. 802.

⁴ Lucian, Hist. p. 362.

mans besieged Edessa in the province of Osrhoene, and gained many signal victories; that Osrhoes was once forced to save himself by swimming cross the Tigris; that the Parthians received a dreadful overthrow at Europa, a city of Syria, on the Euphrates, a little below Zeugma; and that finally, Osrhoes, who commanded the Parthian troops, having lost his army, was obliged to conceal himself in a cave.

The Parthians overthrown.

While L. Verus indulged in all sorts of pleasures at Antioch, M. Aurelius made it his whole study to reform, by his example, and wholesome laws, the manners of the Romans, to redress abuses, to reward the virtuous, and reclaim the vicious rather by gentle means than severity. The people enjoyed, under his mild administration, all the blessings of liberty; and were no less free than their ancestors had been in the best times of the republic. He paid a greater deference to the senate than Antoninus himself had ever done, referring to that body the decision of such causes as belonged to his own tribunal, and undertaking nothing without their advice; to which he cheerfully submitted. He never failed attending the senate, delivering his opinion there like a private senator. He administered justice in person with great assiduity and impartiality; heard with patience such as complained of his ministers; and endeavoured as far as was consistent with equity, to satisfy all those who had recourse to his judgment. He suffered no criminal to be condemned or executed, till he had examined with great care and attention the charge, and heard what the person accused could allege in his defence. He was naturally inclined to mercy; but nevertheless punished such as were guilty of any enormous crime with the utmost rigour. However, we have innumerable instances of his clemency, and very few of his severity.

Rome happy under M. Aurelius.

His clemency and goodness.

In the following year L. Ælianus, or Lælianus, and Paſtor, being consuls, Statius Priscus made himself master of Artaxata, and a place called The New City, which soon became the first city of Armenia. Priscus being soon after sent against the Parthians, Martius Verus took upon him the command of the troops in Armenia. Partly by force, partly by his wise conduct and conciliating behaviour, he prevailed upon the Armenians to submit to the Romans, and to restore Sohemus to the throne, who, being expelled by Vologeses, had resided some time at Rome, been created a senator, and honoured with a consulship^k. On several medals of this year mention is made of the reduction

Artaxata taken by the Romans.

Armenia reduced.

^k Dio, p. 804.

of Armenia by Verus, who, in some inscriptions, is said to have given a king to Armenia¹. Though he had no share in that conquest; yet the senate distinguished both him and M. Aurelius with the title of Armeniacus, and both assumed this year that of emperor, doubtless for the reduction of Armenia.

M. Aurelius marries his daughter Lucilla to M. Verus.

Next year, when Macrinus and Celsus were consuls, M. Aurelius sent his daughter Lucilla into Syria, to be married to L. Verus, to whom she had been for some time betrothed. She was attended by her sister Cornificia, by Civica Pompeianus, uncle to L. Verus by the father, and many other persons of distinction. M. Aurelius would have willingly accompanied her in person into the East; but parted with her at Brundisium, and returned to Rome, that he might not seem to assume to himself the glory of finishing the Parthian war^m. In the fourth year of M. Aurelius's reign, Gavius Orfitus and L. Arrius Pudens being consuls, Vologeses, having attacked the Romans at the head of a

*Yr of Fl.
2515.
A.D. 167.
B.C. 925.*

The Parthians utterly defeated by Cassius, who takes most of their cities, &c.

very numerous army, was totally defeated by Cassius; who, pursuing the advantages of his victory, advanced to Ctesiphon, took that city, and laid the palace of the Parthian monarchs in ashes. He likewise subdued Edeffa, Babylon, and all Media. The city of Seleucia on the Tigris opened its gates to him, and received the Romans as friends; but nevertheless Cassius ordered the inhabitants, to the number of four hundred thousand souls, to be inhumanly massacred, and the city to be entirely destroyed. On his return, he lost great numbers of his men, who died of distempers, or perished for want of provisionsⁿ. For these successes the senate bestowed on L. Verus, though he had never moved from Antioch, the glorious title of the Conqueror of the Parthians and Medes, as appears from several ancient inscriptions and medals of this and the following year^o. The war being ended, Lucius Verus appointed kings over the foreign nations which had submitted to Rome; and left the senators, who had attended him, governors of the Roman provinces.

L. Verus returns to Rome, and triumphs with M. Aurelius.

Next year, Q. Servilius Pudens and L. Fufidius Pollio being consuls, L. Verus returned to Rome, which he entered in triumph with M. Aurelius, who took his children with him in the triumphal chariot. The title of Parthicus was given by the senate to both emperors, and both assumed that of Father of their Country, which M. Aurelius had

¹ Occo, p. 302, 303.

^m Jul. Cap. p. 26.

ⁿ Dio, p. 802.

Lucian, Hist. p. 358. Ammian. lib. xxiii.

^o Occo, p. 283. Birag.

p. 218, 236.

declined till the return of his brother. L. Verus, after his triumph, intreated, that the title of Cæsar might be conferred on the two sons of M. Aurelius, to wit, Commodus and Annius Verus; who accordingly received that mark of distinction on the twelfth of October. The return of L. Verus proved fatal to the whole world; for he carried the plague into all the provinces through which he passed; so that the infection not only spread through Italy, but extended to the most distant countries that were subject to, or had any communication with Rome, or the Romans (A). M. Aurelius caused such of the Roman people as died, to be buried at his own expence; and enacted some wholesome laws concerning burials and sepulchres, which were in force in Dioclesian's time ^p. The plague was followed by a dreadful famine, by earthquakes, inundations, and other calamities. At the same time the Marcomanni, one of the most warlike nations in Germany, invaded the empire, having first drawn into their alliance all the barbarous nations which bordered on the Roman dominions, from Gaul to Illyricum; namely, the Narisci, the Hermonduri, the Quadi, the Suevians, the Sarmatians, the Victovales, Roxolani, Basternæ, Costobochi, Alani, Vandali, Iazyges, and several other nations.

A dreadful plague rages in all the provinces of the empire;

and is followed by a famine, by earthquakes, &c.

This war, which, by the historians of those times, is called one of the greatest Rome ever sustained, was begun while the flower of the Roman troops were employed in the East against the Parthians; but suspended for some time by the address of the commanders on the frontiers, that Rome might not be at the same time engaged in two such dreadful contests. The affairs of the East were no sooner settled, and L. Verus returned to Rome, than M. Aurelius acquainted the senate, that a war with the Mar-

Yr. of Fl. 2516.
A. D. 168.
U. C. 916.

War with the Marcomanni.

^p Jul. Cap. in M. Aur. p. 28. Oros. lib. vii. cap. 15.

(A) We are told by Ammianus Marcellinus, that this plague first broke out at Seleucia, where the soldiers, pillaging the temple of Apollo, found a little golden coffer underground, which, upon their opening it, emitted such a pestilential air, as immediately infected the neighbouring country, and soon spread into most

parts of the world (1); but those, who wrote at this very time, and before the infection reached the provinces of the Roman empire, assure us, that it began in Ethiopia, and was thence carried into Egypt, and from Egypt into the country of the Parthians, where it infected L. Verus's army (2).

(1) Ammian. lib. xxiii. p. 251, 253. (2) Lucian. de Hist. p. 355, comanni

Both emperors set out from Rome.

comanni was inevitable, and of such consequence, that it required the presence of both emperors; for M. Aurelius was unwilling to commit the whole management of the war to Verus, judging him unfit to conduct it with success; and, on the other hand, dreading to leave him at Rome, where he began to be daily more and more despised, for his enormous debaucheries. The senate approved his proposal; so that both emperors, after having offered an infinite number of sacrifices, and implored, by all sorts of ceremonies, both foreign and Roman, the protection of the gods, left Rome about the close of the year, in their military dress, and hastened to Aquileia, to make the necessary preparations for taking the field early in the spring^a.

The Marcomanni and other German nations sue for peace;

The next consuls were the emperor L. Verus the third time, and M. Quadratus, nephew to the emperor Antoninus Pius. In the spring the two emperors took the field, and their approach struck the enemy with such terror, that they repassed the Danube, and even put the authors and promoters of the war to death. The Quadi, whose king was dead, promised not to crown the person whom they had chosen in his room, without the consent and approbation of the emperors. Most of the nations, who had taken arms, dispatched ambassadors either to the emperors, or their generals, to make their submission, and implore pardon for having disturbed the peace of the empire. Verus, who had left the diversions of the city much against his will, and panted after them, wished to return immediately to Rome; but M. Aurelius, suspecting the sincerity of the Barbarians, continued some time at Aquileia, fortifying that place with new works; then passed, together with Verus, the neighbouring Alps; provided with great care for the safety of Italy and Illyricum; and returned to Rome about the end of this year^b. Apronianus and Paulus being consuls the second time, the war seems to have broken out again; for it appears from several ancient inscriptions, that both princes received this year the title of imperator; which was never done but on occasion of some signal success^c: and in the chronicle of Eusebius we read, that the Romans gained this year an important victory over the Marcomanni, Quadi, Sarmatians, and Dacians^d. Next year, in the consulate of Q. Sosius Priscus and P. Cœlius Apollinaris, the Germans, notwithstanding their late defeat, renewed the war with more vigour than ever; insomuch that both emperors left Rome in the depth of winter, and returned to Aquileia,

^a Jul. Cap. in M. Aur. p. 28. & 39.
in Aur. p. 28. ^b Occo, p. 285. & 309.

^c Dio, p. 808. Jul. Cap.
^d Euseb. Chron, p. 136.

with

With a design to attack the Barbarians; but the plague beginning to rage with great violence, they hastily returned to the metropolis. As they were travelling on the road in the same chariot, L. Verus was seized with an apoplexy near Altinum. M. Aurelius caused him to be immediately taken out of the carriage, and blooded; by which means he brought him alive to Altinum, where he lay three days speechless, and then died, at the age of thirty-nine years, having reigned eight, and some months. M. Aurelius conveyed his body to Rome; caused it to be interred with extraordinary pomp by that of his father L. Cæsar, in the mausoleum of Adrian; prevailed upon the senate, notwithstanding the hatred they bore him, to rank him among the gods; appointed him priests and sacrifices; and took particular care of all his relations, even of his wicked and debauched freedmen, whom, however, he banished the court, retaining only one of that herd, named Eclectus, who afterwards murdered his son Commodus, as we shall relate hereafter.

but renew
the war
with great
vigour.
Yr. of Fl.
2519.
A. D. 171.
U. C. 919.

L. Verus
dies.

L. Verus was a prince entirely abandoned to all manner of lewdness and debauchery. He passed his whole time in revels and banquets, often scouring the streets in the night, and committing great disorders in the public-houses and stews, which he used to frequent in disguise, and mix with the mob, by whom he was often roughly handled. During his four years stay in Syria, he was so immersed in pleasures, and lewd amours, that he was with difficulty prevailed upon by his officers to march twice to the banks of the Euphrates, whence he hastened back to Daphne, one of the suburbs of Antioch, a place so infamous for all kind of lewdness, that "to live after the manner of Daphne," was become a proverb to express the most dissolute and luxurious way of living. In that place Verus abandoned himself, without restraint, to all sorts of abominations, while his generals were carrying on the war against the Parthians, and their allies. His conduct gave occasion to many severe lampoons, the Antiochians being greatly addicted to satire; but Verus preferred his pleasures to his reputation: he brought with him out of Syria a great number of comedians, players, and buffoons, and passed most of his time in their company. Soon after his return to Rome, he was said to have spent at one entertainment six millions of sesterces; for he presented each of the guests, who were twelve in number, with crowns of gold, and with all the

His cha-
racter.

His de-
baucherist,
revels,
banquets,
&c.

^a Jul. Cap. in M. Aur. p. 28, & in Ver. p. 39. Galen. Prog. tom. iii. p. 459.

gold and silver plate, great part of which was adorned with jewels, which they had made use of during the banquet, and likewise with golden boxes filled with precious ornaments; and, at their parting, he bestowed on each of them a chariot, and mules richly caparisoned, to carry them home. He turned the palace, says the writer of his life, into a tavern; for, after he had supped with M. Aurelius, he used to withdraw to his own company, and pass the whole night in drinking with his debauched companions, and lewd women.

His fondness for a horse.

He was so fond of a horse named Celer, or the Swift, that he erected a statue to him in gold, fed him with raisins and almonds, covered him with purple, ordered him to be kept in a room of the palace, and, when he died, dedicated a stately monument to his memory on the Vatican. He suffered his slaves to be as free with him at all times, as they were with their masters, according to the Roman custom during the feast of Saturn; and was entirely governed by them, his freedmen, and his concubines. He built a magnificent villa on the Clodian Way, where he spent most of his time in revelling with his freedmen, and such women as were infamous for their lewdness. He once invited M. Aurelius, who complied with his invitation, and staid five days with him, hoping to reclaim him from his vices by the example of his regular and blameless conduct; but, finding he was not to be reformed, the good emperor bore with him patiently, dissembled his disorders, concealed them as much as lay in his power, and even endeavoured to excuse them. However, it was privately whispered abroad, that Verus's horrible excesses, and his arbitrary manner of proceeding after his return from the East, occasioned a misunderstanding between him and M. Aurelius, who was thought to have intimated in his speech to the senate, that he was not much grieved for the death of his colleague, which enabled him to do good to all without controul or restraint; and, as the best of princes are often maliciously censured, M. Aurelius was said to have delivered himself from so troublesome a colleague, either by poison, or by ordering his physician Posidippus to let him bleed at an improper time^w.

M. Aurelius is said by some to have caused him to be murdered.

M. Aurelius, now delivered from so vicious and troublesome a partner, made it his whole study to oblige all with his engaging behaviour, and unbounded generosity. He seemed to excel not only his predecessors, but even himself, governing with the utmost moderation and mildness^x. The

^w Jul. Cap. p. 28—34.

^x Eutrop.

necessary

necessary preparations for the war with the Marcomanni ingrossed at this time his whole care and attention. His lieutenants gained, it seems, some advantages over that formidable enemy in the very beginning of the ensuing year, while M. Cornelius Cethegus, and C. Erucius Clarus were consuls; for soon after the death of L. Verus, he took upon him the title of emperor, as appears from several medals and inscriptions⁷. However, the Marcomanni soon resumed their courage, and falling upon Vindex, captain of the guards, cut both him and most of his army in pieces⁸. After this victory, they approached the Roman territories, where they were met by the flower of the troops of the empire. A bloody battle ensued, which lasted many hours, both the Romans and Barbarians fighting with incredible courage and resolution; but at length the Romans were utterly defeated, and put to flight, after having lost near twenty thousand men. The Marcomanni pursued the fugitives to the very walls of Aquileia; which city they must have taken, had not the Roman generals rallied their men with astonishing skill and conduct. The Barbarians entered Italy itself, committing everywhere most dreadful devastations⁹. The news of this fatal overthrow filled Rome with terror and consternation. As the plague, which still raged in most provinces of the empire, had greatly weakened the army, slaves, gladiators, and even the banditti of Dalmatia and Dardania, were admitted among the troops. Besides, M. Aurelius prevailed upon some mercenary Germans to serve against their countrymen.

M. Aurelius prepares for the war against the Marcomanni.

The Romans defeated with great slaughter.

Thus a considerable army was soon raised; but as money was wanting to pay them, and defray the other charges of so dangerous a war, the emperor, not being able to prevail upon himself to burden his people with new taxes, exposed to public sale the furniture of the palace, the gold and silver plate, all the valuable pictures and statues belonging to the crown, and even his wife's rich garments embroidered with gold, with a curious collection of pearls, which Adrian had purchased during his long progress through the provinces of the empire, and deposited in a particular cabinet, called Adrian's Cabinet. The sale lasted two months, and produced such an immense sum as enabled the emperor to relieve the people this year, when provisions were very dear, with an extraordinary largess; to defray the charges of a five-years expensive war; and to buy back, at the end of the contest, part of what he had sold, allowing, however,

M. Aurelius sells the plate, jewels, and rich furniture of the palace, to defray the charges of the war.

⁷ Birag. p. 227.
⁸ Dio, lib. lxxi. p. 803.

⁹ Dio, lib. lxxi.

¹⁰ Dio, lib. lxxi.

p. 803. & Lucian. Pseud. p. 493.

*Annius
Verns, the
emperor's
second son,
dies.*

*The Bar-
barians
over-run
several
provinces
of the
empire.*

the buyers full liberty to keep their purchases, or return them, and take their money again ^b. When he was upon the point of setting out from Rome, he married his daughter Lucilla, the widow of L. Verus, to Claudius Pompeianus, who was originally of Antioch, and the son of a private Roman knight, but a person of extraordinary merit, famed for his wisdom and integrity, which M. Aurelius ever preferred to wealth and nobility ^c. However, neither Lucilla herself, nor her mother Faustina, were pleased with the match. Lucilla retained the title of Augusta, and all the badges of sovereignty ^d. Before the emperor left Rome, his son Annius Verus Cæsar died at Palestrina, in the seventh year of his age. M. Aurelius loved him with all the tenderness of a father; but nevertheless bore his death with great firmness, consoling the empress Faustina, and the physicians, who are said to have occasioned his death by opening unseasonably a swelling under his ear. The emperor set out at length for Germany, leaving his son Commodus at Rome, under the care of Pitholaus, his chief chamberlain, with injunctions to employ none but Galen, in case his son should be taken ill during his absence.

The Barbarians laid waste several provinces of the empire, and defeated great armies. The Marcomanni and the Vandals made themselves masters of Pannonia, and held it some time. The Castobochi over-ran Greece, and advanced as far as Elatea, a famous city of Phocis in Achaia; they pillaged cities, and committed on all sides dreadful devastations ^e. However, they were at length vanquished by M. Aurelius, who, during this bloody and destructive war, gave innumerable instances of extraordinary prudence and conduct, choosing rather to prolong the war, and tire out the enemy, than expose his men to unnecessary dangers. The soldiers, animated by the example of their leader, behaved with uncommon bravery; and the captains of the guards, as well as the other generals, signalized themselves in a very eminent manner ^f. The Marcomanni, Quadi, Sarmatians, and Vandals, were constrained to abandon Pannonia, and retire beyond the Danube. The emperor pursued; and coming up with their army, as they were passing that river, gave them a dreadful overthrow. The Iazyges were twice defeated, first in Pannonia, and the second time as they were

^b Jul. Cap. in Aur. p. 29. Eutrop. & Birag. p. 221. ^c Lamp. in Comm. p. 48. Herodian. lib. i. p. 464. ^d Jul. Cap. p. 31. Herodian. lib. i. p. 427. ^e Ammian. lib. xxxi. p. 425. Paul. lib. x. p. 352. ^f Aristid. Orat. ix. p. 117.

crossing the Danube on the ice (B). Pompeianus, the emperor's son-in-law, who commanded a body of troops, desiring to have Pertinax joined in the commission with him, M. Aurelius readily complied with his request, though he had, not long before, upon some complaints, deprived Pertinax of an employment which he held in Dacia. Pertinax was attended with great success in his new commission; which induced the emperor to admit him into the senate. Being soon after convinced, that the complaints brought against him were altogether groundless, to repair the injury he had done him, he honoured him with prætorial ornaments, and appointed him governor of Rætia and Noricum, whence he drove the Germans, who had made an irruption into that province; and was, on that account, notwithstanding the meanness of his birth, raised by the emperor to the consular dignity ².

Pertinax created a senator.

Before the war with the Marcomanni was ended, another broke out in Egypt, the robbers and shepherds of that country, who were numerous, taking up arms at the instigation of their priests, and committing dreadful disorders. Being headed by Isidorus, a man of great resolution and intrepidity, they killed a Roman centurion, and some soldiers, by treachery. The Egyptians joining them in great numbers from all parts, they defeated the Roman troops in a pitched battle, over-ran the whole country, and would have made themselves masters of Alexandria itself, had not Cassius, whom M. Aurelius had appointed governor of Syria, marched against them. Cassius was reckoned the best commander of his age, and had signalized himself both in the Parthian and German wars. However, he did not think it prudent to engage so bold and desperate an enemy; but having found means to sow divisions among them, he obliged them at last to submit, and lay down their arms ³. Cassius, having thus quelled the disturbances in Egypt, marched into Armenia and Arabia, where he performed great exploits. At the same time the Moors over-ran almost all Spain, ravaging that country with fire and sword; but were in the end expelled by the emperor's lieutenants.

Disturbances in Egypt;

which are suppressed by Cassius.

² Dio, p. 810. Jul. Cap. in Pertin. p. 54. Vulcat. Gallican. in Vit. Cass.

³ Dio, p. 803.

(B) A Roman soldier, who was upon guard during the night near the Danube, hearing one of his comrades, who had been taken by the Barbarians, crying on the other side in an affecting

manner, threw himself, armed as he was, into the river, crossed it, rescued his fellow-soldier, and returned with him to his post.

Spain invaded by the Moors, who are driven out.

Severus, afterwards emperor, was at that time quaſtor of the province of Bætica¹. There were likewise ſome commotions in the country of the Sequani, now the Franche-Comté; but theſe the emperor compoſed with his authority, and a little reaſonable ſeverity. The next conſuls were Herennianus and Severus, uncle to the emperor of that name, whoſe at his requeſt, was by M. Aurelius admitted into the ſenate². During their adminiſtration, a great diſpute ariſing between Herodes Atticus and the city of Athens, the emperor ſeemed inclined to favour the latter; a circumſtance which ſo provoked Herodes, who was a man of a violent and fiery temper, that when the cauſe came to be decided by the emperor then reſiding at Sirmium, now Sirmich, in Pannonia, inſtead of pleading with his uſual eloquence, he launched into bitter and ſcurrilous invectives againſt Aurelius, affirming, amongſt other things, that he ſuffered himſelf to be governed by a woman, and an infant only three years old, for the empreſs Fauſtina, and her young daughter, inſtructed by her, had interceded with the emperor in behalf of the Athenians. When he had done railing againſt the emperor, Baſſæus, captain of the guards, told him, that his inſolent behaviour might perhaps coſt him his life: but Herodes, without ſhewing the leaſt concern or remorse, answered, that a man of his age had nothing to fear; and immediately withdrew.

The emperor bears patiently the reproaches of Herodes Atticus.

The emperor heard him the whole time quite unconcerned; and when he withdrew, addreſſing the Athenian deputies, “You may allege your reaſons (ſaid he), though Herodes has not been pleaſed to urge his.” He liſtened to them with great attention, and could not help ſhedding tears when they deſcribed the cruel and arbitrary proceedings of Herodes and his freedmen, who had oppreſſed the people in a moſt tyrannical manner. However, the emperor did not condemn Herodes, but only his freedmen; and the puniſhment which he inflicted upon them was very ſlight, and no-way answerable to their crimes¹. To all he remitted part of it, and to one, named Alcimedon, the whole, thinking him ſufficiently puniſhed by the death of his two daughters, who were killed by lightning after their arrival at Sirmium. Some time after, Herodes complained that the emperor did not honour him, as he had done formerly, with his letters; and the humane prince immediately ſent him an answer, replete with the moſt tender and ſincere expreſſions of friendſhip. Next year, when Maxi-

¹ Jul. Cap. in Aur. p. 31. & Spart. in Sever. Faſt. p. 231. Norris, epiſt. Conſul. p. 103. Philoſt. Soph. 27. p. 558—561.

² Onuph. in Dio, p. 303.

mus and Orfitus were consuls, M. Aurelius gained considerable advantages over the Germans; for on all the medals of this year, mention is made of his victories in Germany, and on some he is styled Germanicus; which title was also bestowed on his son Commodus this year, on the fifteenth of October^m. The next consuls were M. Aurelius Severus the second time, and T. Claudius Pompeianus, during whose administration nothing happened which historians have thought worth transmitting to posterity.

But in the course of the ensuing year, when Gallus and Flaccus were consuls, M. Aurelius, by an event seemingly miraculous, escaped being cut off with his whole army. This event happened beyond the Danube, in the country of the Quadi, where M. Aurelius was making war, and near the river Gran, which rising from the mountains of North Hungary, falls into the Danube opposite the ancient city of Strigonium, to which the Dan gives its nameⁿ. The battle was begun by the enemy's slingers and archers, who, from the opposite banks of the Dan, galled the Romans so severely, that the emperor thought it advisable to pass the river, and dislodge them; a passage which was effected accordingly, not without great slaughter on both sides: but the enemy retiring in good order, as it had been concerted among them before, drew the Romans, who advanced with more bravery than conduct, into a disadvantageous situation, among barren mountains, quite destitute of water. There, closing their ranks, they defended themselves with great bravery, and repulsed the enemy, who, giving over the attack, seized the avenues, and blocked them up on all sides, hoping to reduce by famine those whom they could not overcome by force of arms. The Romans finding themselves thus enclosed among barren mountains, exhausted with their wounds, and the fatigues of the battle, oppressed with heat, and tormented with an insufferable drought, attempted to cut themselves a way through the midst of the enemy; but all their efforts proving unsuccessful, they found themselves obliged to continue under arms, without being able either to fight or retire. In this deplorable extremity both soldiers and officers began to abandon themselves to despair, while the emperor, more affected with the miseries of the soldiers than his own, flew through the ranks, endeavouring to raise their drooping spirits; but as they saw no possible means of escaping

Yr. of Fl.
323.
A. D. 175.
U. C. 923.

M. Aurelius in great danger of being cut off with his whole army by the Marcomanni.

^m Birag. p. 223, 225. Lamprid. in Comm. p. 50. ⁿ Onuph. in Fast. p. 232. Tertul. Apol. cap. 5. Dio, lib. lxxi. p. 805. Baudr. p. 330.

the present danger, his words were ineffectual, and nothing was heard but groans and lamentations, nothing seen but marks of the utmost despair.

*They are
relieved by
a miracu-
lous shower.*

In this distress, when they expected every moment to be either cut in pieces, or to become a prey to the barbarous enemy who surrounded them, clouds appeared suddenly gathering in the air; the sky was overcast, and, to their inexpressible joy, rain fell in great plenty; which the fainting foldiers received, holding their mouths, helmets, and bucklers up to heaven, as they are represented on the famous column of Antoninus at Rome. In this situation the barbarians attacked them; so that they were obliged at the same time to drink and fight; for they were so oppressed with drought, that such as were wounded, drank their own blood mixed with the water which they had received in their helmets. As they were more eager to quench their thirst than to repulse the enemy, they must have been all cut in pieces, had they not been rescued by a dreadful storm of hail, attended with thunder and lightning, which discharged itself upon the Barbarians, as they advanced to the attack. Thus were seen at the same time fire and water descending from heaven; water to refresh the Romans, and fire to destroy their enemies; for either no fire descended upon the Romans, or what fell was immediately extinguished; while the rain which fell upon the Barbarians was so far from overcoming the flames which consumed them, that, on the contrary, it redoubled their violence, as if it had not been water but oil. The enemy, thus destitute of water in the midst of a heavy shower, were obliged either to wound themselves, in order to extinguish with their blood the devouring flames, or to have recourse to the Romans, and throw themselves upon the mercy of M. Aurelius, who received and entertained them with great humanity (C). After so glorious a victory M. Aurelius was pro-

* Dio, lib. lxxi. p. 805, 806.

(E) Thus Dio Cassius relates this memorable event, so much celebrated by Apollinaris, Tertullian, Eusebius, Julius Capitolinus, Themistius in his oration before Theodosius, St. Jerome, Gregory of Nyssa, the poet Claudian, and the chronicle of Alexandria. It was engraved on the famous column of Antoninus, with the other exploits of M. Aurelius during the Marcomannic war, and on another which Themistius tells us he had seen (1). The truth of this event has been universally acknowledged both by the Christian and Pagan writers,

(1) Themist. Orat. xv.

proclaimed emperor the seventh time, and the empress **Faustina** was honoured by the senate with the title of *Mater Castrorum*, or the *Mother of Armies* ^p.

Marcus Aurelius could not, however, be yet prevailed upon by his friends to leave Germany, and return to Rome, being desirous to reduce the countries of the **Marcomanni** and the **Sarmatians** to the state of Roman provinces, not through vanity and ambition, but because he found by experience that he could not rely upon their fidelity. This design he would have compassed, had he not been interrupted in the midst of his conquests by the revolt of **Cassius**, which we shall relate hereafter. He continued in Germany great part of the following year, when **Piso** and **Julianus** were consuls; and having quartered twenty thousand men in the countries of the **Quadi** and **Marcomanni**, harassed these two nations so dreadfully, that they resolved to abandon their native soil. But **M. Aurelius** having received timely notice of their design, prevented them from putting it in execution; so that their fields being laid waste, and all communication with the neighbouring nations cut off, they were at last constrained by famine to send ambassadors to the emperor, and sue for peace. The **Quadi**, at the same time, released all the Roman deserters, and thirteen thousand prisoners, whom they had taken during the war; and by that present obtained a peace, upon condition that they should not for the future trade within the Roman dominions, nor settle within six miles of the **Danube**. But this peace was short-lived; for the **Quadi**, instead of executing the articles of their agreement, joined the **Lazyges**, who were still in arms, and drew over the **Marcomanni**. At

The Marcomanni and Quadi sue for peace.

^p Dio, p. 806.

who nevertheless disagree as to the authors of it. **Dio Cassius** ascribes it to a celebrated magician of Egypt, named **Arnuphis**, who attended the emperor in this war (2); **Suidas** to a magician, named **Julianus**, who was originally of **Chaldaea**, and wrote several books of magic (3). **Julius Capitolinus** (4), **Themistius** (5), and the poet **Claudian** (6), pretend that this

shower was owing to the emperor's own prayers. In the above-mentioned column of the **Antonini**, it is by the Pagans ascribed to their Thundering **Jupiter**. But all the Christian writers assure us, that so signal a favour was granted by heaven to the prayers of the Christian soldiers who served in the Roman army.

(2) Dio, p. 105, 806.
in *M. Aur.* p. 32.
Cons. Honor. 6. p. 183.

(3) *Suid.* p. 439.
(5) *Themist. Orat.* xv.

(4) *Jul. Cap.*
(6) *Claud.* in

the

the same time they expelled Furtius, their king, for disapproving their measures, and, of their own authority, appointed Ariogeses in his room; which conduct M. Aurelius resented so highly, that though the Quadi promised to set at liberty fifty thousand Roman captives, upon condition that he concluded a peace with them, and confirmed Ariogeses in the title of king, the emperor would not hearken to the proposal, but, on the contrary, proscribed the new prince, and set a price upon his head.

They receive a great overthrow.

The Marcomanni, and other nations obtain a peace.

Avidius Cassius revolts.

His expedition.

In consequence of this proscription, the Quadi, being joined by the Marcomanni, the Iazyges, the Buri, the Narisci, and many other nations, attacked the Romans; but were, after a long, bloody, and obstinate dispute, totally defeated. Ariogeses himself was taken prisoner, and brought to the emperor, who, notwithstanding his late menaces and resentment, generously spared his life, and contented himself with confining the captive to the city of Alexandria, the metropolis of Egypt¹. After this victory most nations in Germany sent deputies to implore peace, offering to submit to such terms as the emperor should think fit to impose. The Quadi seem to have continued in arms till the reign of Commodus. The Marcomanni, after such repeated losses, submitted, and obtained a peace, upon condition that they should not settle within five miles of the Danube. Zanthicus, king of the Iazyges, waited on M. Aurelius in person, attended by all the great men of the nation; and was received into favour, but obliged to retire with his people farther from the Danube than the Marcomanni. They were a very powerful and warlike people, and had taken above a hundred thousand prisoners during this war, whom they restored to liberty upon the conclusion of the peace. Besides, they supplied M. Aurelius with a body of eighteen thousand horsemen, of whom he immediately sent five thousand into Britain, where the Romans were threatened with a new war. The Buri, Narisci, and other German nations, obtained peace upon such terms as the emperor would never have granted, had he not been obliged to put an end to this war in order to lead his troops against Cassius, whose revolt was likely to bring dreadful calamities upon the empire, as it had already raised the courage of the barbarians.

Avidius Cassius, whom we have frequently mentioned in the Parthian and Egyptian wars, was, as some authors write, descended by the mother from the ancient family of the Cassii. His father, Avidius Severus, raised himself,

¹ Dio, p. 808. & in Excerpt. Val. p. 717.

according

according to the author of his life¹, from the degree of a centurion to the first employments of the state; and was, on account of his extraordinary parts, deservedly favoured by the emperor, M. Aurelius, but died before the revolt of his son (D). He was remarkable for maintaining discipline among the troops; but his severity, according to Vulcatius, favoured of cruelty; for if any soldier was found to have taken any thing by violence from the people of the provinces, he caused him to be immediately crucified in the place where the fact was committed: some he ordered to be burnt alive, others, chained together, to be thrown into a river, or into the sea. He punished deserters by cutting off their hands and legs, saying, that the sight of a criminal, living in misery, made a deeper impression than his being put to death at one blow. As he had been attended with wonderful success against the Parthians, M. Aurelius, in his first war with the Marcomanni, sent him against the Sarmatians, their confederates. While he was encamped near the Danube, some auxiliaries of his army, upon intelligence that the enemy lay carelessly on the banks of that river, went without his knowledge to attack them, killed three thousand, and returned to the camp loaded with booty. Their centurions, who had projected this enterprize, and headed them in the action, expected some great reward from Cassius, for having, with a handful of men, killed such a number of the enemy, while the tribunes and other officers had neglected to favourable an opportunity. But Cassius, considering this as a bad precedent, which might be attended with worse consequences, instead of rewarding the centurions, caused them all to be seized, and crucified like slaves. This severity occasioned a mutiny in the army; but Cassius, without betraying the least fear, appeared unarmed in the midst of the incensed multitude, crying aloud to them, "Kill me; and to your neglect of duty, add, if you dare, the murder of your general." This intrepidity damped their fury; and, no one daring to utter a single

*His severity to-
wards the
soldiers.*

*A signal
instance
of it.*

¹ Vulcat. Gallican. in Cassio.

(D) Such is the account which Vulcatius Gallicanus gives us of his extraction. But another historian writes, that Cassius himself owned, that he had nothing, except the name, common to him with the famous Cassius, who killed Cæsar the Dictator; and adds, that he was originally of Cyrrhum in Syria, and the son of Heliodorus, who had the good fortune to raise himself by his eloquence to the government of Egypt (7).

(7) Dio, lib. lxxi. p. 810. Aristid. Orat. xxvi.

word

word of complaint, they returned to their tents, and thenceforth made it their principal study to learn and observe the military laws, knowing they served under a general who could not, by any fears or menaces, be prevailed upon to wink at their faults, or suffer them to pass unpunished. This instance of severity made such a deep impression upon the minds of the Sarmatians, that, despairing to conquer a people thus rigid in military discipline, and the rules of war, they immediately sent ambassadors to the emperor to implore peace for a hundred years^a.

*Appointed
governor
of Syria.*

*He restores
the mili-
tary disci-
pline a-
mong the
troops.*

After the first Marcomannic war, he was, by M. Aurelius appointed governor of Syria, the emperor esteeming him the best qualified of any in the empire to restore the ancient discipline, entirely neglected by the troops quartered in that province. Nor was he mistaken in his judgment; for in a few months the most dissolute were reclaimed from their pleasures and luxurious manner of living, the ancient discipline was revived, and the whole army thoroughly reformed. Cassius, upon his arrival at Antioch, ordered all the soldiers and officers to repair immediately to their colours; published a proclamation, forbidding them, on pain of being cashiered, to appear at Daphne; every seventh day examined their cloaths, arms, and equipages; and frequently obliged them to perform their exercises in a body, saying, it was a shameful thing that wrestlers and gladiators should be continually exercised, and not soldiers, whose labours are lessened in proportion as they become accustomed to them^c. As for Cassius's other qualities, the author of his life represents him as a man endowed with great virtues, which, however, were allayed with enormous vices; inso-much that he was by many styled a second Catiline.

*Is an ene-
my to mo-
narchy.*

Dio Cassius speaks of him, not only as an eminent commander, but as a person equal to, and in every respect worthy of, the sovereign power^d. He always abhorred an absolute and monarchical government, and is thought to have had nothing else in view, when he revolted, but to restore the commonwealth to its former authority. He had been charged with a design of deposing Antoninus Pius; but his father, who was a man of great interest at court, having prepossessed the emperor in his favour, the accusation was dropt. However, he was thenceforth regarded as a disaffected person. When he commanded in the Parthian war under L. Verus, that prince suspecting him, and indeed, not without reason, wrote, concerning his designs

^a Vulcal. Gall. in Cassio, p. 46.
lib. lxxi. p. 810,

^c Idem ibid. p. 47.

^d Dio,

to M. Aurelius, his partner in the empire. But the emperor took no notice of the charge brought against him; for, upon the return of Cassius from the East, where he had performed great exploits, he put him at the head of an army which he sent against the Sarmatians, and afterwards appointed him governor of Syria. In the mean time the Marcomanni, and other German nations, renewing the war with great vigour, Cassius embraced that opportunity to seize the empire. Some authors write, that the empress Faustina, being well apprised that her son Commodus was altogether unqualified for the sovereign power, and fearing that whoever might usurp it, would destroy her and her little children, solicited Cassius to declare himself emperor as soon as he should hear the news of M. Aurelius's death, and promised, in that case, to marry him. They add, that a report being spread of the emperor's death, Cassius immediately caused himself to be proclaimed in his room; and that, though the rumour proved afterwards false, he found himself too deeply engaged to recede. Others clear Faustina from being privy to the design of Cassius (E), and tell us, that the report of the emperor's death was propagated by Cassius himself, in order to induce the governors of the eastern provinces to join him, M. Aurelius being greatly beloved, and his son no less hated. Be that as it will, he soon reduced all the countries beyond Mount Taurus, and Egypt itself, Flavius Calpurnius, governor of that pro-

*He assumes
the title of
emperor;*

*and is
joined by
most of the
eastern na-
tions.*

▼ Vulcat. Gall. in Cass. p. 42, 43.

(E) Vulcatius Gallicanus, to clear the empress from this charge, produces two letters, written by her to M. Aurelius, on occasion of this revolt. In one she expresses herself thus: "My mother Faustina, in the time of the defection of Celsus, advised your father, Antoninus Pius, to shew his kindness in the first place to his own family, and next to others. And certainly it is incumbent upon every good prince to take care of his wife and children. Your son Commodus is yet very young, and your son-in-law, Pompeianus, is advanced in

years, and a stranger. Do not therefore spare men, who, had they conquered would neither have spared you nor your wife and children. You will hear from Cæcilius, whom I shall send to you, what reports have been spread of you by the wife of Cassius, by his son, and by his son-in-law, &c." In the other letter she presses him to pursue Cassius and his accomplices with the utmost severity, if he loves her and his children; assuring him, that if he neglects to punish them, they will not fail to depose him (S).

(S) Vulcat. Gall. in Vit. Cass.

vince,

vince, having declared in his favour. The troops in Bithynia was likewise inclined to his party, but restrained by Clodius Albinus their commander, of whom we shall have occasion to speak hereafter. Several foreign princes and nations espoused his cause, but none with more zeal than the Jews^x.

Martius Verus, governor of Cappadocia, was the first who informed the emperor of this revolt. M. Aurelius concealed it for some time; but when he found it divulged by public fame, he acquainted the army with it in a very judicious and modest speech, only complaining of the ungrateful return which Cassius made him for the kindness he ever had, and should ever have for him, notwithstanding his revolt, as he hoped to evince, as soon as he had brought him to a sense of his duty. Neither did Cassius, on his part, utter any injurious reflections against M. Aurelius, but only charged him with neglecting the most important affairs of the state to attend the study of philosophy, and with suffering, through an excess of clemency, many disorders, which it was incumbent upon him, as emperor, to correct. In the mean while M. Aurelius, having terminated the war with the Marcomanni, and other German nations, as the time approached for his son Commodus to assume the manly robe, sent for him from Rome, and gave him it with the usual ceremonies, on the seventh of July, ordering, on that occasion, considerable sums to be distributed among the Roman people^y. The senate were no sooner informed of the revolt of Cassius, than they declared him a public enemy, and confiscated his estate, which the emperor commanded to be returned, not into his private coffers, but into the public treasury.

M. Aurelius marches against him.

Cassius is killed;

At length M. Aurelius set out for Illyricum, with a design to pursue his march into the East, and meet Cassius, declaring, that he was ready to resign the empire to him, if the gods should judge it expedient for the public good, that Cassius should reign, and not M. Aurelius: "For it is not (added he), any private interest or ambition, but the public welfare, that induces me to undergo so many labours, to expose myself to so many dangers." He was not advanced far on his march, when news were brought him, that Cassius had been killed by a centurion named Antonius, and another officer of a still inferior rank, who had the command only of ten men^z. Dio Cassius gives us but a confused relation of his death; and Vulcatius Galli-

^x Vule. Gall. p. 42, 43. Dio in Excerpt. Val. p. 718. Albin. Vit. p. 81. ^y Jul. Cap. in Aur. p. 32. ^z Lamprid. in Commod. p. 43.

canus promises to inform us how he was killed, and where he was defeated; but afterwards forgot his engagement. However, from what he writes it is plain, that a battle, or encounter, happened between him and the emperor's troops, probably commanded by Martius Verus; for on his bravery the emperor chiefly relied, and had therefore sent him before him into Syria, investing him with the government of that province, instead of Cappadocia. With Cassius was killed his captain of the guards, and soon after his son Metianus, whom he had appointed governor of Egypt, to secure that important province. No other person of distinction, at least of the senatorial order, perished in this rebellion; nay, these were put to death without the emperor's knowledge, and against his will; for he was greatly concerned that the blood of any senator should have been shed during his reign: hence, when the head of Cassius was brought to him, he expressed much sorrow, turned his eyes away, and caused it to be honourably interred, complaining, that he had been deprived of an opportunity of shewing his mercy. The reign of Cassius, or rather his dream, as Dio Cassius styles it, lasted but three months and six days^a. M. Aurelius himself would neither try, imprison, nor condemn, any senator concerned in the conspiracy; but referred the whole to the senate, appointing a day for the criminals to appear before their judges.

and his head brought to the emperor, who is concerned for his death.

In the mean time; after acquainting the senate that he had appointed Pompeianus, his son-in-law, consul for the ensuing year, he thus exhorts them to proceed, rather with clemency than rigour, against those whom they were to try: "As for what concerns the defection of Cassius, I beg and conjure you, conscript fathers, to have a tender regard to your characters, and to mine: let not a senator be put to death; let the blood of no person of distinction be spilt; let such as have been already banished return, and enjoy their estates. I wish I could raise from the dead those who perished in the first heat of the war. Revenge is never commendable in an emperor; it ill becomes him in his own cause, let it be ever so just. You will therefore pardon the children of Avidius Cassius, his son-in-law, and his wife. But why do I say pardon, when they have committed no crime? Let them live in safety, and enjoy their paternal estate, with all their father's plate and furniture. Let them have full liberty to live where they please, that

His letter to the senate.

^a Dio, p. 813. Vulcat. Gall. in Cass. p. 43. Noris, Ep. Conf. p. 110.

His kindness to the children of Cassius.

they may appear so many instances of your clemency, and of mine. I farther intreat and desire, that all the senators, and Roman knights, in general, who have been privy to this rebellion, be, by your authority, exempted from death, proscription, infamy, in short, from all kind of punishment. Allow it to be said, to your honour and mine, that in this rebellion such only perished as were killed in the confusion of war^b. The senate not only complied with his request, but returned him thanks for the regard he had shewn even to the most undeserving members of their body. The emperor took the children of Cassius under his protection, forbidding any one to reproach them with the misfortunes of their family, and severely punishing such as did. Thus the rebellion of Cassius served only to give new lustre to the unparalleled clemency and generosity of M. Aurelius, who could not prevail upon himself to take away the lives of those who had conspired to take away his life and that of his son.

Commodus invested with the tribunitial power.

The senate, in their answer to the emperor's letter, acquainting them that he had named Pompeianus consul against [the ensuing year, begged him to return to Rome, and to vest his son Commodus with the tribunitial power^c. With the latter request he complied, as appears from several ancient inscriptions^d. But, as for the other, the emperor either did not return to Rome, or his stay there was very short; for we are told, that, immediately after the death of Cassius, he went into the East, and that he had begun his march thither even before he received these news^e: it is not, therefore, likely, that he interrupted it to return to Rome. He had sent Pertinax before him into Syria to make head against the rebels; but, upon the news of the death of Cassius, he recalled him, and appointed him governor of Illyricum, in which province he had gained no less reputation by his prudence and moderation, than by his many victories over the Germans during the Marcomannic war; so that he was greatly esteemed and revered not only by Romans and foreigners, but even by the enemies of the Roman name^f. The emperor took with him into the East his son Commodus, and his wife, who died suddenly in a village called Halala, at the foot of Mount Taurus. She was a woman of a loose and wanton life, and altogether unworthy of having such a father as Antoninus,

The emperor goes into the East. Faustina dies. Her character.

^b Vulcat. Gal. in Cass. p. 44. & Jul. Cap. in Aur. p. 33.

cat. Gall. in Cass. p. 45.

^c Vulcat. Gal. in Cass. p. 45. ^d Onuph. in Fast. p. 235. P. Pagi,

p. 218. ^e Dio, p. 813. Jul. Cap. in Aur. p. 32. ^f *ibid.* p. 32.

and such a husband as M. Aurelius, whom some did not believe to be the father of Commodus (F). Faustina being dead, Fabia, the sister of L. Verus, who had been formerly betrothed to M. Aurelius, did all that lay in her power to induce him to marry her; but he, thinking it improper to subject his children to the authority of a step-mother, took, in the room of a lawful wife, the daughter of one of the deceased empress's domestics²; for to that

² Vulcat. Gall. p. 34.

(F) Her chief gallants were Tertullus, Utilius, Orfitus, and Moderatus, whom nevertheless Antoninus, either not giving credit to what was said of the empress, or dissembling her irregular conduct, preferred to several employments. Her lewdness, and her intimacy with the above mentioned persons, especially with Tertullus, were so publicly known, that a mimic having one day asked his companion upon the stage, in the presence of the emperor, what was the name of the person who was too familiar with his wife, the other repeated the name of Tullus three times; whereby the whole audience perceived, that he meant Tertullus, the first syllable of his name signifying *three times* (1). Some of the emperor's friends advised him to divorce her; but he replied, "If I divorce her, I must return her dower, that is, the empire, which I received of her father." In one place he commends her free and open temper, her sincerity in friendship, and her acquiescence in his will (2). He bewailed her, according to the emperor Julian (3), more than was becoming in a man of his gravity,

for a woman of the most unblemished character. He pronounced himself her funeral oration, and intreated the senate to rank her among the gods; for which he is deservedly exposed and ridiculed by the above mentioned emperor (4). He founded a society of young women, whom he educated at his own expence, and called after the empress's name. The village where she died he made a colony, and a city, styling it *Faustinopolis*; and erected a temple to her honour, which was afterwards consecrated to Heliogabalus, the most lewd and debauched of all the Roman emperors. The senate, out of flattery to the emperor, not only ranked among the goddesses a person unworthy of a place among women of any modesty and reputation, but erected statues to her and M. Aurelius, with an altar, ordaining, that young women, immediately after their marriage, should repair to it, and offer a solemn sacrifice (5). By this scandalous institution, they deserved that their daughters should resemble Faustina, and their sons Commodus.

(1) Jul. Cap. in Aur. p. 32. cap. 14.

(3) Julian. Cæf. p. 13.

(2) M. Antonin. de seip. lib. i.

(4) Idem ibid. p. 50.

(5) Dio, lib. lxxi. p. 813. Jul. Cap. in Aur. p. 32.

purity, which the Christian religion requires and commands, even the most virtuous among the pagan philosophers were utter strangers. As the Syrians had readily joined Cassius, a law passed at this time, enacting, that no one should be sent with the character of governor into his own country ¹.

The emperor's clemency, and goodness to the cities that had sided with Cassius.

The next consuls were T. Vitrasius Pollio and M. Flavius Aper, both for the second time ¹. Claudius Pompeianus, the emperor's son-in-law, and Clodius Albinus, who had prevented the legions in Bithynia from joining Cassius, as we have related above, were likewise consuls this year. M. Aurelius, arriving in the East, freely pardoned all the cities and communities, which had joined Cassius, except Antioch, the inhabitants of that metropolis having distinguished themselves, above all the rest, by their zeal for his competitor, and their hatred to him. He therefore published a severe edict, deprived them of all their privileges, suppressed their public assemblies, and prohibited their shows and spectacles, to which they were greatly addicted: but his anger being soon appeased, before he left Syria, he restored them to their former condition, and even condescended to visit their city. From Syria he passed into Egypt, where he not only forgave, but enriched, with several privileges Alexandria, which had likewise sided with Cassius. Having visited most of the chief cities in the East, and given every where innumerable instances of his humanity, he sailed from Smyrna, where he had staid some time, and had several conferences with the celebrated sophist Aristides; and arrived at Athens, in which place he was initiated in the Eleusinian mysteries. He conferred many favours on the city of Athens, and established public professors of all sciences, with liberal allowances to be paid them yearly out of the treasury ².

From Athens he sailed for Italy; and, landing at Brundisium, commanded the army immediately to resume the Roman gown; for neither he, nor any of his officers or soldiers, ever appeared in Italy in a military habit. He returned to Rome with his son Commodus, whom he named consul, though at that time but sixteen. Soon after, he bestowed on him the title of imperator, which he himself assumed for the eighth time, probably on account of some victory gained over the Germans by Pertinax, governor of Illyricum. At length, on the twenty-third of December, both he, and his son Commodus, entered Rome, distribut-

Yr. of Fl.
2525.
A. D. 177.
U. C. 925.

He returns to Rome;

¹ Dio, lib. lxxi. p. 813.
p. 814. Philostrat. Sophist. 37.

² Idat. Onuph. &c.

² Dio,

ing, on this occasion, large sums among the people and soldiery, amounting to as many pieces of gold a head as he had been years absent, which, according to Dio Cassius¹, were eight. At the same time, he exhibited magnificent shews, though he took no pleasure himself in such diversions. In the following year, Aurelius Commodus Cæsar and Quintillus being consuls, Commodus was honoured by the senate with the title of father of his country, and by the emperor with that of Augustus; on which occasion M. Aurelius remitted whatever was due from individuals, either to the emperor, or to the treasury, ever since the time in which Adrian had cancelled all such debts^m. He moreover presented the inhabitants of Smyrna with large sums, enabling them to rebuild their city, which was almost ruined by a dreadful earthquakeⁿ. He could not suppress the combats of gladiators without offending the people; however, as he was an enemy to all cruelty and bloodshed, he allowed the combatants only blunt swords, in the nature of our foils, saying, that with them they might equally display their skill and dexterity^o.

which he enters in triumph with his son Commodus.

Instances of his generosity and good-nature.

Next year, when Orfitus and Julianus Rufus were consuls, the Marcomanni, and their confederates, renewing the war with great vigour, the emperor resolved to march against them in person. But before he left Rome, he married his son Commodus to Crispina, the daughter of Brutus Præfens; and repairing to the senate, desired leave to take out of the public treasure the necessary sums for carrying on the war, saying, that an emperor had nothing of his own, not even the palace he lived in; but that all belonged to the senate and people^p. He then went to the Capitol, where he declared upon his oath, that, since his accession to the empire, no senator had been put to death by his order; that such as had perished in the rebellion, had been killed without his knowledge; and that he would have spared them all, Cassius himself not excepted, had it been in his power. As he was eminently skilled in philosophy, many persons of learning earnestly intreated him to explain, before he left Rome, the most difficult and intricate points of the different sects of philosophers; a task which he performed accordingly, spending therein three whole days. They seemed to apprehend, that, by his death, this knowledge might have been lost; a circumstance that shews how thoroughly he was versed in the different tenets of the various sects of philosophers^q. At length he left Rome, with

He marches against the Marcomanni;

¹ Jul. Cap. p. 29.

^m Oros. lib. vii. cap. 15.

^a Arist.

Orot. xx.
p. 814.

^o Dio, in Excerpt. Val. p. 718.

^p Dio,

^q Jul. Cap. in Cass. p. 41.

his son Commodus, on the fifth of August of the year 179, the eighteenth of his reign^r.

*and gains a
signal vic-
tory over
them.*

In the following year, Commodus Augustus and T. Annius Aurelius Verus being consuls the second time, M. Aurelius gained a signal victory over the Marcommanni, Hermonduri, Quadi, and Sarmatians; for which both he, and his son Commodus took the title of emperor^r. All we know of this action is, that the Roman army was commanded by Paternus, and the Germans were totally defeated; insomuch that all Germany, and the different nations inhabiting it, would have been obliged to submit to the Roman yoke, had not the emperor been prevented by death from crowning his conquests with the reduction of so powerful and extensive a country. He died in the following year, Præfens and Sex. Quintilius Condius being consuls, on the seventeenth of March, after having lived

Yr. of Fl.

2529.

A. D. 181.

U. C. 929.

His death.

fifty-eight years ten months and twenty-two days, and reigned, from the death of Antoninus Pius, eighteen years, and ten or eleven days^t (G). Two days before his death, he recommended his son Commodus to the army, and conjured his friends to assist him with their advice. On the seventh day of his illness, he desired to see his son again; but immediately dismissed him, lest he should be infected with the same distemper. When he was gone, he composed himself, as if he designed to sleep, and expired the following night^u. He died, according to Tertullian^w, at Sirmium, now Sirmich, in Slavonia; according to the two Victors, at Vendobona, now Vienna, in Austria. It is unnecessary to mention the concern of the soldiery, and Roman people, for the loss of so good and so great a prince. His body, or rather his ashes, were conveyed to Rome, and deposited in the monument of Adrian. He was immediately ranked among the gods, a temple was erected, and an order of priests appointed to his honour. Whoever had not

*He is ranked
among
the gods.*

^r Spart. in Com. p. 50.

Aur. p. 34.

^t Dio, p. 810, 814, & Theoph. Antioch. lib. iii.

p. 137. Chron. Alex. p. 614.

Apul. cap. 25.

^u Birag. p. 227. Jul. Cap. in M.

^w Jul. Cap. p. 34.

^x Tertul.

(G) Dio Cassius positively affirms, that he was dispatched by his physicians, desirous to ingratiate themselves with Commodus. On the other hand, Julius Capitolinus seems to ascribe his death to a contagious distemper; for he tells us, that the plague still raged in the ar-

my; and adds, that the emperor, with much difficulty, prevailed upon his son, and his friends, not to abandon him; an instance of neglect and ingratitude which he took so unkindly, that he abstained from all sort of nourishment.

some

some image or statue of M. Aurelius in his house, was judged a sacrilegious person, says Julius Capitolinus; in whose time, that is, in the reign of Dioclesian, he was still worshipped in most families among their domestic gods.

He was, without all doubt, one of the greatest and best princes that ever swayed a sceptre. His only fault was, according to Dio Cassius, his too great clemency; for, though he rewarded with much generosity the good and virtuous, yet he did not restrain and punish, with due severity, the vicious and wicked; whence some governors of provinces, presuming upon his lenity, plundered, and often with impunity, the people committed to their care (H).

His fault.

The meditations of M. Aurelius, which have reached our times, are highly commended by all the ancients, as an epitome of the best rules which human reason, or philosophy, can suggest for the conduct of a virtuous life. Some have questioned, whether what has been transmitted to us be the whole work, or only an abstract of it, as it consists of loose and unconnected sentences, whereof the sense is not always complete. But the ablest critics are of opinion, that M. Aurelius left the work such as it is at present, having composed it only for his private use². It is comprised in twelve books, of which the first seems to have been composed in the heat of the Marcomannic war, while he was encamped on the banks of the Gran in the country of the Quadi¹. He finished the second book at Carnuntum, where he resided, according to Eutropius, three whole years². As M. Aurelius was a great encourager of learning, many eminent writers, especially philosophers, flourished in his reign, of whom we shall give an account in our notes (I).

His meditations.

CHAP.

* Vide Voss. Hist. Græc. lib. ii. cap. 14.
cap. 15.

1 M. Aurel. lib. i.

2 Idem, lib. ix. cap. 3.

(H) The emperor Julian prefers M. Aurelius to Cæsar, to Augustus, and to all the other princes who had reigned till his time; but at the same time finds fault with him for bequeathing the empire to his vicious son Commodus, and not to his son-in-law Pompeianus, who was a person of extraordinary parts and well qualified for so great a trust (1).

(I) The most celebrated among the philosophers were, Crescentius, Celsus, Lucian, Demonax, Alexander the famous impostor, Sextus the Stoic, Sextus the empiric, Numenes, Hermogenes, and Aristides. Crescentius was a Cynic philosopher, and, according to the character which Tatian draws of him, abandoned to all manner of lewdness (2). We find

(1) Julian. Cæsar. 13, 14, 22, 23, 41, 49.

(2) Tatian. p. 157.

C H A P. LVII.

The Roman History, from the Death of M. Aurelius to the Death of Alexander, when the Empire was first transferred without the Consent of the Senate.

COMMODUS was the first emperor born in his father's reign, and the second that succeeded his father in the empire. He was born on the thirty-first of August *Commodus.* of the year 161, and raised to the empire on the seventeenth

two philosophers bearing the name of Celsus, and both of the sect of Epicurus, mentioned by Origen (3). Of these, one flourished under Nero, and the other under Adrian, and his immediate successors (4). The latter wrote several books against magic, much commended by Lucian, who inscribed to him his history of the celebrated impostor Alexander, which he undertook at his request (5). Some distinguish this writer from the author of the discourses against the Christians, whom Origen confuted; but Baronius, and most critics ascribe to the same writer the books against magic, and those against the Christian religion.

The works of Lucian have reached our times, and are deservedly admired for the elegance and purity of the style; but filled with impious and atheistical sentiments: whence he had the surname of the Atheist, or the Blasphemer (6). He was a native of Samosata in Syria, and of a mean descent.

In his youth he declaimed, and pleaded causes, and was in his old age register to the governor of Egypt (7). He wrote, according to Eunapius, the life of the philosopher Demonax, whose disciple he had been. He represents him as the greatest philosopher of his time; but, after all, he was only a Cynic, somewhat more polished and civilized than the rest of his brethren. What we find most commendable in him is, that, though he was of a noble family, rich, eloquent, and well versed in most branches of learning; yet he lived in poverty, practised great austerities, and would not suffer any one to attend him. When he grew old, and could no longer exist without being assisted by others, he chose rather to die of hunger, than to allow any person to perform the least office about him. He was a native of Cyprus; but resided at Athens, where he was highly esteemed in his life-time, and equally regretted after his death. The

(3) Orig. in Cels. lib. i. p. 8.

Pseud. p. 498.

& Apol. p. 262.

(4) Suid. p. 55.

(5) Idem ibid.

(6) Lucian. Hist. p. 359.

(7) Lucian. Hist. p. 359.

teenth of March of the year 181. He is commonly called **L. *Ælius Aurelius Commodus***, and sometimes **Commodus Antio-**

account which **Lucian** gives us of the celebrated impostor **Alexander** is very diverting. He was a native of **Abonitichos**, a maritime city of **Pamphylia**, and generally revered on account of his pretended prediſtions, and counterfeit miracles, as a prophet. **Lucian**, however, was not easily deceived, considered him as an impostor, ridiculed his miracles, and exposed him in all companies; which so provoked the pretended prophet, that he endeavoured to stir up his countrymen, the inhabitants of **Abonitichos**, against him. **Alexander**, nevertheless, some time after, pretended to be reconciled to him; and even offered him a ship to convey him to **Amastria** in **Pontus**, whither his affairs called him. **Lucian** accepted the offer; but was not a little surprised, when, at a great distance from land, he observed the pilot bursting into tears, and making various signs to the mariners. **Lucian** imagined the vessel to be in danger; but was more terrified, when the pilot frankly confessed, that he had received positive orders from **Alexander** to throw him into the sea; but could not prevail upon himself, after having lived so long without reproach, to commit a murder in his old age. He left him, however, in a desert and barren island, where he must have soon perished, had he not been saved by the vessels of the king of **Bosporus**, which happened to sail by.

He would have prosecuted **Alexander** before the governor of **Pontus** and **Bithynia**; but that magistrate dissuaded him from it: telling him, that he could not condemn **Alexander**, without incurring the displeasure of **Rutilianus**, who was very powerful at court, and had in his old age married the daughter of the impostor, believing the moon to be her mother. Thus **Lucian** had no other means left of being revenged on **Alexander**, but by writing his life, and painting him in his true colours. This piece, however, he did not publish till the impostor's death, which happened in the reign of **M. Aurelius**.

Sextus was a native of **Chæroneæ**, in **Boeotia**, by sect a Stoic, and had been preceptor to **M. Aurelius**, and **L. Verus**. Most writers suppose him to have been nephew to **Plutarch**. At the same time flourished another philosopher bearing the same name, but a native of **Libya**, and by sect a **Pyrrhonian** (8). He is styled by **Galen**, and **Diogenes Laërtius**, the empiric. Some of his works have reached our times (9). About this time **Numenes** is likewise supposed to have flourished, whose writings are often quoted by **Eusebius** and **Theodoretus** against the Pagans. He was, according to **Suidas** (1), a native of **Apamea**, in **Syria**. He proves, that **Plato** copied from **Moses** what he wrote concerning God, and the forming

(8) **Ruald. Vit. Plut. cap. 51**
(1) **Suid. p. 242.**

(9) **Vide Jonf. lib. ii. cap. 2.**

Antoninus. He was educated with great care by his father; but nevertheless proved one of the most lewd, cruel, and

of the universe (2). He seems to have joined together the tenets of Plato and Pythagoras: whence he is by some ranked among the followers of Plato; by others, among the Pythagoreans (3), Crones, Aristocles, Antiochus, Alexander, Hermogenes, Aristides, and Phrynicius, were all contemporaries with Numenes. Crones was one of his disciples, and wrote a treatise on the generation of things, which we find quoted by Origen and Plotinus (4). Aristocles was a native of Pergamus, and first a Peripatetic philosopher; but afterwards he abandoned the study of philosophy, and applied himself to that of eloquence, under the celebrated Herodes Atticus. He declaimed in his own country; but did not meet with the applause he expected (5). Antiochus was a native of *Ægæ*, in Cilicia, by profession a sophist, and one of the disciples of Dionysius, the Milesian, of whom we have spoken in the reign of Adrian. Alexander was likewise a profess sophist, and is greatly commended by Philostratus. He was born in Seleucia, comprised at that time in Cilicia; but afterwards raised to the metropolis of Isauria. He was one of the disciples of Favorinus, Adrian's great favourite, and afterwards secretary for the Greek tongue to M. Aurelius. Hermogenes, a

native of Tarsus, gained such reputation among the sophists, when he was but fifteen years old, that M. Aurelius went in person to hear him, was greatly delighted with his extraordinary genius, and loaded him with presents. Aristides, one of the most celebrated sophists of his time, was a native of Adrianothera, in Mysia: he is highly commended for his eloquence, by Phrynicius, his contemporary (6), by Philostratus (7), and in general by all the ancients; but if he excelled, as he is said to have done, all the other sophists, several of his orations, which have reached our times (8), convince us, that we have no reason to regret the loss of their works.

Lucius, or as he is styled by others, Saturantius Apuleius, was a native of Madaura, a Roman colony on the borders of Numidia and Getulia, the son of one of the chief men of that city, and of Salvia, a descendant of Plutarch (9). He passed his childhood partly in Greece (for his mother was originally of Thessaly), and partly at Carthage, where he learned, without the assistance of an instructor, the Latin tongue; but not without much labour, as he himself owns. From Carthage he went to Athens, where he applied himself to the study of poetry, geometry, dialectics, and music, and thoroughly in-

(2) Suid. p. 242. (3) Vide *Jonf. lib. iii. cap. 10.* (4) *Idem, ibid.* (5) *Philostr. Sophist. 39.* (6) *Phot. cap. 158.* (7) *Philostr. Soph. 35.* (8) *Vide Phot. cap. 246, &c.* (9) *Apul. Met. lib. ii. p. 115. & Prol. p. 29.*

and wicked tyrants that ever disgraced a throne. His character confirms in some degree the opinion of those who believed

formed himself of the different tenets of the various sects of philosophers; but embraced that of Plato, which, however, did not prevent him from studying magic with great application. He is even said to have been so well skilled in that art, as to work several miracles, which the Pagans opposed to those of our Saviour (1). These miracles, however, are not well attested; and Apuleius himself, being accused as a magician before Claudius Maximus, proconsul of Africa, endeavoured to clear himself from the charge of such an enormous crime, by an excellent discourse, which has reached our times (2).

Amongst the historians who flourished under M. Aurelius, those of the greatest reputation are Polyænus, a Macedonian, who dedicated to M. Aurelius, and L. Verus, the eight books of stratagems published by Caesabon (3). He left other works (and among the rest a description of the city of Thebes), which have been long since lost (4). Amyntianus wrote, and addressed to M. Aurelius, the history of Alexander the Great, which was not much admired. He likewise published the life of Domitian, and the lives of some other Latin and Greek princes (5); but none of his works have reached our times. Those of Damo-

philus have undergone the same fate: he was a philosopher and sophist, brought up, as Suidas informs us (6), by Julianus, who was consul in the year 175, the fifteenth of M. Aurelius's reign. The history of Greece, written by Pausanias in ten books, has reached us. The author describes with great truth and exactness the situation and antiquities of each city, and all the curiosities which in his time were to be seen in a country once so famous; but some critics find fault with him for interweaving his history with so many fables, which, however, are of great use for the right understanding of the ancient writers. In the beginning of the reign of M. Aurelius, flourished Iamblichus, by birth a Babylonian, and by profession a magician. He published several works in Greek, and, among the rest, one styled *Babylonica* (7), which is said by Tennulius to be still preserved in the famous library of the Escorial in Spain (8). Vossius takes this *Babylonica* to be nothing else but the silly romance, of which Photius has been at the trouble of giving us too long an abstract. Theophylus of Antioch has transmitted a table of the Roman emperors, from Julius Cæsar to the death of M. Aurelius, with the years, months, and days, of their re-

(1) Hieron. Pl. lxxxii. Lact. lib. v. cap. 3. Aug. epist. cxxxvi.
 (2) Apul. Apol. (3) Voss. Hist. Græc. lib. ii. cap. 14. (4) Suid.
 p. 559. (5) Phot. cap. 131. (6) Suid. p. 640. (7) Phot.
 cap. 49. (8) Voss. ibid. lib. iv. p. 582. & Samuel. Tennul. in Not.
 ad Iambli. Arith. Armetiq., ann. 1667.

believed him to be the son of a famous gladiator, with whom his mother Faustina was said to have had a criminal inter-

respective reigns. *Æmilius Parthenianus* composed the history of all those who attempted to usurp the sovereign power. He did not end his history before the year 175, for he wrote the life of *Avidius Cassius*. He is quoted by *Vulcatius Gallicanus*, who flourished under *Dioclesian*. *Vossius* ranks him among the Latin historians (9). *Proculus*, who instructed *M. Aurelius* in the Latin grammar, and was on that account raised by him to the consulship, published a work on foreign countries, or, as some read it, religions, *De regionibus, or religionibus* (1). He was born in Africa; but thoroughly versed in the Latin tongue (2). *Hephæstion* and *Harpocration*, who instructed *L. Verus* in the Greek language (3), have both left some works behind them. An excellent piece *de re metrica*, which seems to be very ancient, and bears the name of *Hephæstion*, a grammarian of Alexandria, has reached our times, and is commonly ascribed to *Hephæstion*, the preceptor of *L. Verus*. Another learned piece is still extant, on the ten orators of Athens, done by *Valerius Harpocration*, supposed to have been preceptor to *L. Verus* (4). At this time flourished *Apollonius* of Alexandria, surnamed *Dyscoles*, who published several grammatical

pieces. He was father to *Herodianus*, who lived, according to *Suidas*, in the time of *M. Aurelius*, and published several grammatical pieces (5). *Artemidorus*, author of several books on the interpretation of dreams, lived under *Antoninus Pius* and *M. Aurelius*; for he is quoted by *Lucian*; and he himself tells us, that he was acquainted with one who had entered the lists in the combats that were exhibited by *Antoninus Pius* at *Puteoli*, in honour of *Adrian*. He was a native of *Ephesus*, and in his other works styled himself *Artemidorus the Ephesian*; but in that on the interpretation of dreams, he took the surname of *Daldianus* from *Daldis*, a small city of *Lydia*, the birth-place of his mother. *Marcellus* of *Ida*, in *Pamphylia*, wrote, in the reign of *M. Aurelius*, forty-two books, in hexameter verse, on physic; and is quoted by *St. Jerom* (6). *Marcellus*, a Latin poet, published some satires in the beginning of the reign of *M. Aurelius*, not sparing that prince, nor his predecessor *Antoninus Pius*; but he patiently bore his raileries. *Apuleius* speaks of a poet who lived in his time, and had begun an excellent poem upon *Alexander the Great*. This is probably the writer whom he calls elsewhere *Corvinus Clemens*, and

(9) *Voss. Hist. Lat. lib. iii.*

Tyrannor. p. 195.

(2) *Voss. Hist. Lat. lib. i. cap. 12.*

Cap. in Vit. Ver. p. 35.

(4) *Suid. p. 441.*

(5) *Ibid. p. 379.*

(6) *Vide Lucian. in Vit. Demonac. p. 546. M. Ant. lib. i. cap. 6. Philostr. Sophist. 29. Phot. cap. 246. Pausan. lib. viii. p. 272.*

intercourse^a. He gave, when only twelve years old, a remarkable instance of his cruelty, at Centumcellæ, now Civita Vecchia; where, finding the water in which he bathed somewhat too warm, he commanded the person who attended the bath to be thrown into the furnace; nor was he satisfied, till those who were about him pretended to have put his order in execution^b. After his accession to the empire, he equalled in cruelty Caligula, Domitian, and Nero himself, sporting with the blood of his subjects and fellow-creatures, of whom he caused great numbers to be racked and butchered in his presence, merely for his diversion (L). As for his lewdness, the author of his life tells

His cruelty.

us,

^a Jul. Cap. in M. Aur. p. 30.

^b Lamprid. in Commod.

who was quæstor. Aulus Gellius, or Agellius, must have flourished about this time; for he was disciple to Titus Castricius, to Favorinus, to Herodes Atticus, and to Cornelius Fronto, who all lived under Adrian and Antoninus Pius. Corneilius Fronto had been consul, when Aulus Gellius was a youth. He bestows great encomiums on the celebrated philosopher and apostate Peregrinus; but does not mention his death, which rendered him more famous than any thing he had done in his life-time; for he publicly burnt himself at the sports of the two hundred and thirty-sixth Olympiad: whence we conclude, that Aulus Gellius had left off writing before that time, that is, before the year 165 of the Christian æra, the fifth of the reign of M. Aurelius and L. Verus. He studied grammar at Rome, and philosophy at Athens, under Calvisius Taurus; whence he returned to Rome. He left no work behind him, except his *Noctes Attice*; for thus he styled the collection of several memorable and amusing events, which

he compiled for the use of his children.

(L) The ancients relate several instances of his cruelty, very odd and monstrous: he caused one to be thrown to the wild beasts, for reading the life of Caligula written by Suetonius, because that tyrant and he had been born on the same day. Seeing one day a corpulent man pass by, he immediately cut him asunder, partly to try his strength, in which he excelled all men, and partly out of curiosity, as he himself owned, to see his entrails drop out at once. He took pleasure in cutting off the feet, and putting out the eyes, of such as he met in his rambles through the city, telling the former, after he had thus maimed them, by way of raillery, that they now belonged to the nation of the *Monopodii*; and the latter, that they were now become *Luscini*; alluding to the words *lusciniæ*, a *nightingale*, and *luscus*, *one-eyed*. Some he murdered, because they were negligently dressed; others, because they seemed trimmed with too much nicety. He pretended to great skill in surgery,

*His lewd-
ness and
debauche-
ries.*

us, that even in his father's reign he turned the court into a brothel; and, upon his death, he abandoned himself, without restraint or shame, to all manner of vice, spending whole days and nights in public houses amongst the meanest of the people, and in the company of gladiators, buffoons, and common prostitutes. He kept constantly three hundred concubines, and the like number of catamites. He debauched all his own sisters, and murdered one of them, named Lucilla, after he had forced her to comply with his incestuous desires. But to give a detail of his infamous practices and pollutions, is beneath the dignity of an historian, and what we cannot help condemning in Suetonius, and other writers.

*His skill in
archery.*

He took great delight in shooting with the bow, and gave innumerable proofs of his dexterity and skill in that art, which we should esteem fabulous were they not attested by all the ancients. His strength was so great, that he is said to have run an elephant through with his spear, and to have killed in the amphitheatre a hundred lions, one after another, and each at one blow. Forgetful of his rank and dignity he entered the lists with the common gladiators, having learned with them, in the public school, the use of their weapons. He is said to have fought in the amphitheatre seven hundred and thirty-five times, and to have always come off conqueror; whence he often subscribed himself, "The conqueror of a thousand gladiators." He seemed to be more pleased with the applause of the populace on these occasions, than any of the ancient Roman captains had ever been with a triumph. Imagining one day that the people rather derided than applauded him, he ordered them all to be massacred on the spot, and the city to be set on fire; which barbarous sentence would have been put in execution, had not the captain of the prætorian guards, with much difficulty, appeased him. Having with his extravagancies soon drained and exhausted his trea-

*He enters
the lists
with the
common
gladiators.*

surgery, especially at letting blood: but often, instead of easing by that means those whom he visited, or who were prevailed upon to recur to him, he cut off their ears and noses. He assumed the name and habit of Hercules, appearing publicly in a lion's skin, with a huge club in his hand, and ordering

several persons, though not guilty of any crime, to be disguised like monsters, that, by knocking out their brains with his club, he might have a better claim to the name of the great destroyer of monsters. In short, the shedding of blood seemed to be his chief employment (1).

(1) Lamprid. in Commod.

fury, he betook himself to all manner of rapine; loaded the people with taxes; sold the governments of the provinces, and other employments; exempted criminals from the punishment due to their crimes upon their advancing a sum of money, and allowed others to murder whomsoever they pleased; so that the city, and indeed the whole empire, was filled with blood and massacres, every one purchasing of the emperor the liberty of killing such as he feared or hated^c. But to proceed to the history of his reign in the order of time.

His avarice.

Commodus, a few days after his father's death, went to the camp, attended by all the chief officers; and there, after a plausible and popular speech to the soldiers, presented them with the usual donative. He would have returned immediately to Rome, panting after the diversions of the city, but Pompeianus, who had married his sister, representing how dangerous and shameful a thing it would be for him to return before he had ended the war, he was, with much difficulty prevailed upon to continue in Pannonia, where he is said to have gained some advantages over the Quadi, which must have been very inconsiderable, since he did not on that account take upon him the title of emperor. However, both the Quadi and Marcomanni, imagining that he was resolved to pursue the war, and finding themselves no longer in a condition to make head against his victorious troops, proposed an accommodation, which he readily granted upon the following terms: 1. That they should not settle within five miles of the Danube. 2. That they should deliver up their arms, and supply the Romans with a certain number of troops when required. 3. That they should assemble but once a month in one place only, and in the presence of a Roman centurion. And 4. That they should not make war upon the lazyges, the Buri, or the Vandali, without the consent of the people of Rome. On the other hand, Commodus promised to evacuate all the castles and fortresses which he held in their country, except such as were within five miles of the Danube^d. With the other German nations, which his father had almost entirely reduced, he concluded a very dishonourable peace; nay, of some he purchased it with very large sums. Having thus rather abandoned than ended the war, he repaired to Rome, where he was honoured with a triumph, the surname of Pius, and all the marks of distinction that had ever been conferred upon the most deserv-

He concludes a peace with the Marcomanni, Quadi, &c.

^c Lamprid. in Commod. lib. i. p. 461. A. R. Vict.

^d Dio, lib. lxxvii. p. 817. Herodian.

ing princes. Having visited the Capitol, and other temples, and returned thanks to the senate, the people, and the soldiery, for their fidelity and attachment to him during his absence, he was conducted to the palace on the 22d of October^a.

The Caledonians invade the Roman territories; but are repulsed by Ulpian Marcellus.

In the following year Commodus entered upon his third consulship, having for his colleague Birrus, or Burrhus, probably Antistius Burrhus, who had married his sister^f. The next consuls were Mamertinus and Rufus, during whose administration Commodus took the title of emperor for the fifth time, on account of some advantages gained by his lieutenants, Albinus and Niger, over the Barbarians who dwelt beyond Dacia. The above mentioned consuls were succeeded by Commodus the fourth time consul, and Victorinus the second time. During their consulship the Caledonians, having passed the wall which parted them from the Romans, committed dreadful devastations, and cut in pieces a whole Roman army, with their general; but were in the end repulsed with great slaughter by Ulpian Marcellus, a man of mean descent, but an excellent commander, and a strict observer of the military discipline. The ancients give us no particular account of this war; but only tell us that it proved very bloody; that the emperor, for the great advantages gained by his lieutenant, took the title of emperor the sixth time, with the surname of Britannicus; and that Ulpian Marcellus, by his gallant and prudent conduct, gained such credit and reputation, that Commodus, envying the glory he had acquired, designed to put him to death; but afterwards allowed him to live.

Commodus dismisses his father's friends and counsellors.

Commodus, who had hitherto followed the advice of his father's friends and counsellors, now began to despise them, thinking himself sufficiently qualified to govern without so many tutors. He therefore discharged them all, employing in their room either his debauched companions, or such as they recommended to him. Thus Pescennius Niger was preferred to the command of the armies in Syria, by the interest of the wrestler Narcissus; and many others were raised to great employments by means of the emperor's freedmen, slaves, and concubines, whose imperious and arrogant behaviour drew upon the young prince the hatred and contempt of the senate; which he being well apprised of, began in his turn to put to death, under various pretences, some of the most eminent members of that

^a Lamprid. in Commod. Dio, p. 818. Herodian. p. 471. Goltz, p. 81.
^f Vit. Commod. p. 48. Onuph. p. 238.

Illustrious body. His sister Lucilla finding him abhorred on account of his cruelties, by all the great men in Rome, formed a conspiracy against him, with a design to place in his room a person whom she favoured, and was thought to love both above her brother and her husband Pompeianus. She had the title of empress, and all the honour attending it, being the widow of the emperor L. Verus; but nevertheless was obliged to give place to Crispina the wife of Commodus, a mortification which her haughty spirit could not brook. She therefore drew into a conspiracy Claudius Pompeianus, to whom she had betrothed her daughter Quadratus, and many other senators of distinction. It was agreed among the conspirators, that they should assassinate the emperor while he was going to the amphitheatre, through a narrow dark passage; and that Pompeianus should give him the first blow. Accordingly they assaulted him at the appointed place; but Pompeianus shewing him, instead of striking at once, the naked dagger, and crying out, "This present the senate sends you," the guards had time to rescue the emperor, and seize the conspirators, who were soon after executed. The emperor banished his sister to the island of Capreae, where he afterwards ordered her to be privately murdered^s. This same year the empress Crispina was likewise confined to the island of Capreae, and there murdered by the emperor's order, for imitating him in his debaucheries^h (M). One Anterus, or, as others call him Saoterus, a native of Nicomedia, and the emperor's favourite freedman, was thought to have instigated him to the wicked measures which he was pursuing; for he bore a great sway with the prince. Wherefore the captains of the guards caused him to be murdered by Cleander, of whom we shall speak hereafter. The emperor

A conspiracy formed against him by his sister Lucilla, and others;

who are all put to death.

The captains of the guards cause his favourite freedman to be murdered.

^s Vit. Commod. p. 46. Herodian. p. 474. Dio, p. 818. p. 818.

^h Dio,

(M) Quadratus had a concubine, by name Marcia, and a favourite freedman named Eclactus. The latter the emperor created his chief chamberlain, and the former, who was a woman of great beauty, he kept for his concubine, and distinguished her with all the honours that were peculiar to the empresses, except that of hav-

ing fire and torches carried before her (1). She is supposed to have been a great friend to the Christians; and to her power at court, and authority with the emperor, is commonly ascribed the profound tranquillity which the church enjoyed in the midst of so many cruel executions (2).

(1) Herod. lib. i. p. 486,

(2) Vide Baron. Ann. 118.

expressed

expressed greater concern for his death, than he had done for the conspiracy formed against himself; and being informed that Tarruntinus Paternus, one of the captains of the guards, was privy to it, he removed him from his employment, on pretence of creating him a senator, and a few days after caused him to be assassinated, with Salvius Julianus, to whose son the daughter of Paternus had been betrothed, pretending that they had both conspired to depose him, and seize the empire for themselves¹. Salvius Julianus was grandson to the famous civilian of that name under Adrian, and uncle to Didius Julianus, who was afterwards emperor.

Several persons condemned and executed.

In the same year were falsely accused of treason, condemned, and executed, Velius Rufus, Egnatius Capito, and the two Quintilii, Maximus, and Condianus, who had been all consuls. Sextus Condianus the son of Maximus, who had likewise been consul, and was a young man of extraordinary parts, was condemned with his father and uncle; but escaped, at least for some time, by causing a report to be spread, that he was dead; but many attesting that he was still alive, diligent search was made after him. Many persons, who had never seen him, were accused of having harboured and concealed him in their houses, and, upon that charge, either put to death, or banished. Of Sextus himself we find no farther mention in history. Æmilius Juncus and Attilius Severus were both banished in their consulship, which they held, it seems, during the two last months of the year, and with them, many senators and knights of great distinction². Under the succeeding consuls M. Eggius Merullus and Cn. Papirius Ælianus, the emperor's favourite minister Perennis was accused of aspiring to the empire, and put to death. He was captain of the prætorian guards, an excellent commander, and, according to Dio Cassius, a man without reproach.

Perennis, the emperor's favourite minister, put to death.

His downfall and death differently reported.

While Commodus was assisting at the Capitoline sports instituted by Domitian in 86, a person, in the habit of a Cynic philosopher, appeared unexpectedly in the midst of the theatre; and, addressing the emperor, exclaimed aloud, that, while he regarded nothing but his pleasures and diversions, he was in danger of losing both his life and the empire, by the wicked practices of Perennis, and his children. Perennis caused the pretended Cynic to be immediately seized as a madman, who disturbed the public sports, and soon after ordered him to be burnt alive; a circum-

¹ Vit. Commod. p. 47.

² Dio, lib. lxxi. p. 319. Vit. Com-

mod. p. 47.

stance which gave the emperor no small jealousy. Not long after some soldiers, arriving at Rome from Illyricum, where the son of Perennis commanded, shewed Commodus, in a private audience, some medals, on which was engraved the image of the son of Perennis, as if he had been already emperor; which intelligence so alarmed the prince, that he commanded the traitor to be immediately put to death ¹. Thus Herodian: but Dio Cassius and Lampridius relate his downfall in a quite different manner. His wife, his sister, and his two sons, underwent the same fate. To his eldest son, who commanded the army in Illyricum, the emperor wrote an obliging letter, enjoining him to come with all possible expedition to Rome, to receive new marks of the esteem and affection he had for him and his father. As the young man was an entire stranger to what had passed, and not in a condition to revolt openly, he readily complied with the invitation; but had no sooner entered Italy, than he was cut in pieces by the soldiers who attended him, pursuant to the private orders they had received from Rome ^m. The other brother was probably killed at Rome with his father.

His wife and children undergo the same fate.

Perennis was succeeded in the post of prime minister by Cleander; for the emperor himself was so engaged in his pleasures and diversions, that he could not bestow one minute on the affairs of state: he would not even be at the trouble of signing his dispatches: and, in several letters to his friends, all he wrote was vale, *farewel*. Cleander was by birth a Phrygian, and originally a slave, having been publicly sold as such in Rome. He belonged at first to M. Aurelius, and afterwards to Commodus; who, favouring him above the rest of his slaves, allowed him to marry Demostracia, one of his concubines, brought up the children he had by her in the palace, presented him with his liberty, and appointed him his chamberlain. He is thought to have procured the death of Perennis, that he might engross all the power to himself; a design which he easily compassed, and abused his authority in a more flagrant manner than Perennis had ever done. By him all things were openly set to sale, offices, provinces, public revenues, public justice, and the lives of men both innocent and guilty. Antistius Burrhus, who had married one of the emperor's sisters, took the liberty to acquaint the prince with the unwarrantable conduct of his minister; but that liberty cost him his life, Cleander having charged him with aspiring to the em-

Perennis is succeeded by Cleander

who abuses his authority.

¹ Herodot. lib. i. p. 474, 475.
mod. p. 48.

^m Dio, p. 321. Vit. Com-

The captains of the guards changed daily and hourly.

pire, and prevailed upon the emperor, whom he blindly controuled, to condemn him, and all those who espoused his cause, or attempted to defend him. Among these was Ebutianus captain of the guards, in whose room Cleander persuaded the emperor to substitute himself, and two others, whom he named for that purpose. Upon the death of Perennis, that employment had been given to Niger, who held it only six hours; another enjoyed it but five days, and several others not so long, the timorous emperor changing the captains of his guards daily and hourly. Most of these officers lost their lives with their employment, being accused of treason by Cleander, who solicited, and at last obtained, that important post for himself ^a.

The Roman soldiers in Britain mutiny.

After the death of Perennis, the emperor pretended to be greatly concerned for many things that had been done during his administration, in order to throw the whole odium upon the deceased. He wrote a soothing letter to Pertinax, whom Perennis had banished into Liguria, his native country, and kept there for the space of three years, appointing him commander of the troops in Britain, which had mutinied, and raised great disturbances in that island, neither the Roman soldiers, nor the Britons, being able to bear the tyrannical government of Commodus. Upon the arrival of Pertinax, the soldiers pressed him to assume the sovereignty; but he, rejecting the offer with indignation, brought, by degrees, the mutinous soldiery to a sense of their duty, and restored tranquility to the province, but not without great trouble and danger; for one of the legions openly revolting, much blood was spilt, and Pertinax himself left upon the spot for dead. As his severity drew upon him the hatred and ill-will of the soldiery, he desired to be recalled; but the emperor did not comply with his request till three years after. This year Commodus took the title of imperator for the eighth and last time, on account of the advantages which Clodius Albinus is said to have gained over the Frisians ^o.

Yr. of Fl.
^{2535.}
A. D. 187.
U. C. 935.

The war of the deserters under the conduct of Maternus;

Under the next consuls, Crispinus and Ælianus, a common foldier, named Maternus, having deserted his colours, and being joined by many others guilty of the same crime, grew in a short time so powerful, the banditti flocking to him from all parts, that he over-ran and plundered great part of Gaul and Spain, stormed the strongest cities, and struck the emperor and people of Rome with such terror, that troops were raised, and armies dispatched against him. Pef-

^a Herodot. p. 475. Dio, p. 882. Vit. Commod. p. 48. ^o Albin. Vit. p. 81.

Cennius Niger was sent to make head against him in Gaul, where he became very intimate with Severus, who was then governor of the country of Lyons ^p. Maternus, finding himself reduced to great straits by Niger, divided his troops into several small bodies, and marched privately, by different ways, into Italy, having nothing less in view than to murder the emperor during the solemnity which was kept annually, in honour of the mother of the gods, and, upon his death, to seize the empire. They all arrived at Rome undiscovered; and some of his men had already mixed themselves with the emperor's guards, when he was betrayed by others of his own party. He was immediately seized, and executed; and his death terminated the disturbances, which some of his followers had begun to raise in other provinces ^q. At this period broke out the most dreadful plague, says Dio Cassius, that had been known. It lasted two or three years, and raged with the greatest violence in Rome, where it frequently carried off two thousand persons a day. The emperor, to avoid the contagion, retired to Laurentum, a city of Latium, on the sea-side.

who is seized and executed.

In the following year, Fuscianus and Silanus being both consuls for the second time, the emperor declared, that he designed to pass over into Africa; but having, under that pretence, exacted very considerable sums, and even suffered the people to offer up vows for his safe return on the fifth of April, he spent the money in banquets and revels, and continued at Rome, and in the neighbourhood. About this time Severus was translated from the government of Pannonia to that of Sicily, whence he returned to Rome, to clear himself of a crime with which he was charged; namely, that of consulting the astrologers, as if he entertained thoughts of usurping the sovereignty. His cause was heard by the captains of the guards, the colleagues of Cleander; and, as Commodus was hated, says Spartian, Severus was cleared, and his accuser crucified ^r. This year great part of the Capitol, a famous library, and several contiguous buildings, were destroyed by lightning ^s. Eusebius says, it consumed whole quarters of the city, and in them several libraries. At the same time the city was afflicted with a dreadful famine, occasioned, as some authors write, by Cleander, who, having now nothing less in view than the sovereignty, privately bought up all the corn, in order to raise the price of it, and gain the affections of the soldiery and people, by distributing it among them ^t. Other writers

Severus accused, and acquitted.

^p Nig. Vit. p. 73.

^q Herodot. lib. i. p. 475. Vit. Com. p. 51.

^r Spart. in Sever.

^s Euseb. in Chron. Oros. lib. viii. cap. 16.

^t Dio, p. 823.

tell us, that Papirius Dionysius, whose province it was to supply the city with provisions, contributed towards the famine, in order to make the people rise against Cleander.

Cleander acts in an arbitrary manner.

It is certain, however, that the populace ascribed all their calamities and misfortunes to the minister, who now began to act in a more arbitrary manner than ever, putting to death and pardoning, banishing and recalling from exile, whom he pleased. Several manumitted slaves he created patricians, and placed them in the senate; others he made governors of provinces, and raised to the first employments. But his reign was of short duration; for the following year, in which Rome saw for the first, and indeed for the last time, twenty-five consuls, all named by Cleander, and most of them his creatures, while the people were celebrating the Circensian games, a troop of children, having at their head a young woman of an extraordinary stature, and a fierce aspect, entering the circus, began to utter aloud many bitter invectives, and dreadful curses, against Cleander; which being for some time answered by the people with other invectives and curses, the whole multitude suddenly flew, in a tumultuous manner, to the palace of Quintilius in the neighbourhood of Rome, where the emperor was then residing with Cleander; and renewing their curses and imprecations, demanded the head of the perfidious wretch, by whom they had been so grievously and tyrannically oppressed.

The people rise against him.

The prætorian horse fall upon them; but are put to flight.

Cleander ordered the prætorian cavalry to charge the multitude; which order they obeyed, driving them, with great slaughter, into the city; but there the populace discharging showers of stones, bricks, and tiles, from the tops of the houses and from the windows, while the city-guards, who hated Cleander, joining the multitude, the prætorian horse were forced to give way, and save themselves by a disorderly flight. The people pursued them to the palace of Quintilius, where the emperor was passing his time in the company of some lewd women, wholly unapprised of the tumult, Cleander having forbidden those who were about him to acquaint him with it. However, Marcia, his favourite concubine, thought it her duty to inform him of what had passed; and his sister Fadilla, entering his apartment in a great fright, and with her hair dishevelled, cried out aloud, that all was lost, unless he abandoned Cleander to the fury of the incensed populace. The emperor, struck with terror and amazement, sent for Cleander; and having caused his head to be struck off that instant, sent it to the people; its appearance put an end to the combat, which still continued with great slaughter. His head and body were, by the incensed populace, insulted in a most

The emperor causes his head to be struck off.

out-

outrageous manner. His wife, his children, and most of his creatures, were, at the same time, massacred; and their bodies first dragged through the streets, and then thrown into the common sewer *. Julianus and Regillus were appointed captains of the guards in the room of Cleander and his colleagues; but the emperor caused them both to be soon after assassinated, though he had ever shewn a particular kindness and affection for Julianus, whom he used to style his father. About the close of this year, Pertinax was, at his own request, recalled from Britain, and charged with the care of supplying the city with provisions, in the room of Papirius Dionysius, who was likewise put to death, with all those who had in any degree contributed to the raising of the price of corn.

In the following year Commodus entered upon his sixth consulship, taking Petronius Septimianus for his colleague. The several conspiracies which had been formed against himself and his ministers, filling him with jealousies and suspicions, he abandoned himself, without controul, to bloodshed and cruelty (N). This year Severus, who had been one of the twenty-five consuls of the preceding year, was appointed commander of the troops in Illyricum; and Pertinax was sent into Africa, with the character of pro-consul. The following year, Apronianus and Bradua being consuls, a fire broke out in the night-time in the celebrated temple of Peace, preceded, and, as some writers suppose, produced, by a slight earthquake; for no thunder was heard * (O).

Yr. of Fl.
2539.
A. D. 191.
U. C. 939.

The
The temple
of Peace
consumed
by fire;

* Dio, lib. lxxii. p. 823. Herod. lib. i. p. 479—481. Vit. Com. p. 48. * Herodian. lib. i. p. 485. Dio, p. 829.

(N) Among the multitudes of all ranks and conditions, who were doomed to be inhumanly massacred this year, Dio Cassius gives us a particular account of the death of Justus Alexander, a native of Emesa in Syria; who being informed that the emperor had sent thither a centurion, with a band of soldiers, to murder him, surprised them in the night, and killed them to a man, with several others, whom he suspected to be his enemies. Having thus filled the city with slaughter, he

retired on horseback, with a design to take refuge among the Barbarians; and would have effected his escape, had he not been retarded by a friend of his, who could not keep up with him, and whom he could not bear to leave behind. Being, therefore, overtaken by those who pursued him, he first killed his friend, that he might not fall into their hands, and afterwards himself (1).

(O) Dio Cassius supposes, that it began in the adjoining houses. Bethat as it will, the temple, with

(1) Dio, p. 823.

A a 3

all

and the temple of Vesta, with many other buildings.

The fire spread with great violence to other quarters of the city, and consumed a great number of stately edifices; among the rest, the temple of Vesta. The Vestals fled to the palace, with the statue of Pallas, which was supposed to have been brought from Troy, and had never before been exposed to public view; but the flames seized the palace itself, and reduced great part of it to ashes. However, the public papers and registers were with great difficulty preserved. The conflagration lasted several days, in spite of the utmost endeavours of the people, the soldiery, and the emperor himself; who, returning on that occasion, from the country, exposed his own person, in order to encourage others to exert themselves by his example. It ceased, at length, of itself, or was extinguished by a sudden and violent rain. This year Pertinax was preferred from the government of Africa to that of Rome, and Didius Julianus appointed to govern Africa in his room. The next consuls were Commodus the seventh time, and Helvidius Pertinax the second. This year the Roman troops were defeated by the Saracens, whom we find now mentioned for the first time in history. Commodus, being told, that Severus, who commanded in Illyricum, and Nonius Marcus, who had the command of some other army, aspired to the empire, appointed Clodius Albinus, in whom he reposed an entire confidence, governor of Britain, and wrote a letter to him with his own hand, says Julius Capitolinus, authorizing him to assume the title of Cæsar, and the ornaments peculiar to that dignity, in case any disturbances should arise in the empire. Albinus, adds the same writer, prudently declined that honour, fearing to be involved in the ruin of Commodus, which he apprehended was speedily

† Vit. Nigr. p. 77.

all the surrounding buildings, were reduced to ashes. That magnificent structure had been raised by Vespasian after the destruction of Jerusalem, and enriched with the spoils and ornaments of the temple of the Jews. The ancients speak of it as one of the most stately buildings in Rome. There men of learning used to hold their assemblies, and lodge their writ-

ings, as many others deposited their jewels, and whatever else they esteemed of great value. It was likewise made use of as a kind of magazine for the spices that were brought by the Roman merchants out of Egypt and Arabia; so that many rich persons were reduced to beggary, all their valuable effects and treasures being consumed in one night, with the temple (1).

(1) Dio, p. 829. Herod. lib. i. p. 485.

approach-

approaching². The account which Dio Cassius and Herodian give us of the latter part of this prince's reign, is nothing but a detail of his follies, and the shews which he exhibited, and in which he himself acted the chief part. Both these historians were present; and the former, who assisted at the spectacles in quality of senator, tells us, that he, and the other senators, chewed the whole time, bay-leaves, that by their bitterness they might be diverted from laughing at the prince's folly; which would have cost them their lives. However, he owns, that the address and skill which the emperor displayed in shooting with the bow, was universally admired and applauded; for a panther having seized a man, and being ready to devour him, Commodus let fly an arrow against the beast with so much skill and force, that the panther fell dead to the ground, before the man received the least hurt^a (P).

The emperor's folly, and public shews.

He had often appeared on the public stage in the amazonian, and other fantastical dresses; but this year he was not ashamed to enter the lists with the gladiators, to act and to dance in the theatre quite naked. Not satisfied with these follies, he resolved to appear on the first day of the ensuing year 193, as consul, and at the same time as gladiator; and, for that purpose, caused Erucius Clarus and

He acts and dances in public quite naked.

He designs to appear on the first of January like a consul and gladiator.

² Vit. Albin. p. 79.

^a Dio, p. 484. Herod. p. 826.

(P) A few days before his death, he changed the names of some of the months, calling August Commodus, September August, October Hercules, November Invincibilis, December Exuperatorius, and January Amazonius; which last title he himself assumed, because he had first fallen in love with Marcia, upon seeing her painted in the dress of an Amazon. He likewise intended to change the name of the city itself, and call it Colonia Commodiana, or, the Colony of Commodus. Upon this head he wrote to the senate, styling himself in the letter, "Imperator Cæsar Lucius, Ælius, Aurelius, Commodus, Antoninus, Augustus, Pius, Felix, Sarmanicus, Germanicus, Maximinus, Britan-

nicus, Pacator orbis terrarum, Inviçtus Romanus Hercules, Pontifex Maximus, Tribunitiæ Potestatis XVII. Imperator VIII. Consul VII. Pater Patriæ, &c." The senate readily complied with his request, and not only styled Rome Colonia Commodiana, but the house in which they assembled, The House of Commodus. They had given him before, in derision, says Lampridius, the title of Pius, upon his raising to the consulship one of his mother's gallants; the title of Happy, for having compassed the death of Perennis; and that of Hercules, in consideration of his extraordinary strength, and his killing many thousand wild beasts in the amphitheatre.

Sofius Falco, the two consuls elect, to be murdered. This design he imparted to Marcia the night before it was to be put in execution; telling her, that the consuls were to be killed the following night; and that he intended to march in procession, not from the palace, and with the ensigns of the imperial dignity, as was usual on the first of January, but from the school of the gladiators, armed like one of them, and attended by them only. Marcia threw herself at his feet, and conjured him with tears in her eyes, to reflect on the danger to which he exposed his life, by trusting it to men destitute of all honour and probity. But Commodus, without regarding her remonstrances, ordered Lætus, captain of the guards, and Eclectus, his chief chamberlain, to prepare the apartment which he had built for himself in the house where the gladiators belonging to the public were lodged. These two officers did, likewise, all that lay in their power to divert him from so strange a resolution; but to no purpose: for the emperor, instead of yielding to their intreaties, flew into a rage; and, retiring to his chamber, as if he designed to repose himself, it being then about noon, he wrote down, on a piece of paper, the names of many illustrious senators, and other persons of distinction, whom he designed to take off by assassination, in order to enrich himself with their estates; and at the head of the fatal list the names of Marcia, Lætus, and Eclectus appeared. Having left this paper upon his bed, when he went to bathe before dinner, according to the Roman custom, a little child, with whom he used to amuse himself, entering his bed-chamber, innocently took it up; and Marcia, meeting him, snatched it out of his hand, imagining it to be some writing of consequence. She was greatly surpris'd, when, upon viewing it, she found herself, Lætus, and Eclectus, doomed, with the rest, to destruction. She immediately acquainted Lætus and Eclectus with the danger that threatened them, who thereupon resolv'd to preserve themselves by destroying the tyrant ^b (Q).

*He dooms
Marcia,
Lætus, and
Eclectus, to
death;*

*who con-
spire a-
gainst him.*

The

^b Herod. lib. i. p. 486, 487.

(Q) Such is the account which Herodian gives us of this conspiracy. But Dio Cassius, who had already related the death of Domitian with these very circumstances, tells us only in this place, that Lætus and Eclectus, no longer able to bear the cruelties and follies of Commodus, and terrified with his menaces, agreed with Marcia to dispatch him. Julius Capitolinus pretends, that they acquainted Pertinax with their design, who did not attempt to divert them from it. But Dio Cassius

The conspirators agreed, that the safest, and most expeditious way, was to dispatch him with poison; which was accordingly administered by Marcia, as he returned very hot from bathing, after having killed some wild beasts. The emperor, being soon after seized with a heavy slumber, retired to refresh himself with sleep (for he slept, as historians observe, at all hours); and Eclectus, seizing that opportunity, ordered the company to retire, hoping to conceal the cause and manner of his death: but Commodus, awaking when the company was scarce gone, was seized with a violent vomiting; and, suspecting that poison had been given him, threatened all about him with immediate death. The conspirators, fearing he should void the poison, and escape, sent hastily for his great favourite Narcissus, the famous wrestler, who, being gained over with great promises, threw himself upon the emperor, and, seizing him by the throat, strangled him^c. Thus died Commodus, after having lived thirty-one years, and four months; and reigned twelve years, nine months, and fourteen days. He was murdered in a palace which stood on mount Cœlius, where he then resided, because he could not sleep in the imperial palace^d. His body was privately conveyed away, and buried in the fields; but was afterwards taken up by Pertinax, who succeeded to the empire, and deposited in the monument of Adrian.

Yr. of Fl.
2540.
A. D. 192.
U. C. 940.

He is murdered.

His death was no sooner known, than the senate assembled, without waiting for the return of day; and declared him a public enemy, loaded him with curses, ordered his statues to be broken to pieces, his name to be rased out of all public inscriptions, and demanded his body, that it might be dragged through the streets, and thrown into the Tiber. When Pertinax, who had already been declared emperor, answered, that it was buried, they desired to know, who had been so daring as to pay that honour to a gladiator, to a parricide, to a more cruel and bloody tyrant than Nero or Domitian^e. Though he was generally abhorred as a monster of cruelty, and an enemy to mankind, yet the emperor Severus styled himself his brother, caused him to be ranked among the gods, appointed priests and sacri-

His statues are pulled down, and his altar annulled.

^c Herod. lib. i. p. 488. Dio, p. 828. Comm. Vit. p. 52. ^d Euseb. Chron. p. 226. ^e Vit. Com. p. 53. Dio, p. 830.

Cassius and Herodian assure us, that he was altogether unapprised of their attempt, the conspirators not having time to think of any thing but dispatching the tyrant, and securing themselves.

fices to his honour, and ordered the anniversary of his birth to be observed with great solemnity. It is an undoubted fact, that the empire was indebted to him for establishing a company of merchants, and a fleet for conveying corn from Africa to Rome, when any misfortune should befall the fleet that transported it from Egypt. Another action we find recorded of his, truly worthy of the son of M. Aurelius: one Manilius, who had been secretary to Avidius Cassius, and privy to his conspiracy, having made his escape, and concealed himself ever since his death, was apprehended in the beginning of the reign of Commodus, to whom he offered to discover many things of great importance; but Commodus would not so much as hear him; he even burnt all his letters, without opening any one of them[†]. But this transaction happened in the very beginning of his reign, when he followed the advice of the wise counsellors whom his father had placed about him. No mention is made in history of his children; but it appears from an ancient medal, that he had some, who must have died very young[‡]. Of the authors who flourished in his reign, we shall give an account in the notes (R).

Com-

[†] Dio, in Excerpt. Val. p. 725.[‡] Spart. lib. vii. p. 659.

(R) Julius Pollux inscribed to Commodus, when he had only the title of Cæsar, *Onomasticon*, which is still extant, and consists of ten books. It is a collection of synonymous words used by the best Greek writers to express one and the same thing. He was one of the preceptors of Commodus, who, being chiefly taken with his fine and harmonious voice, honoured him with the professorship of eloquence lately founded in the city of Athens. Phrynichus was contemporary with Pollux, and likewise inscribed to Commodus, when he was only Cæsar, a work, of which Photius had read thirty-five or thirty-six books. It was a collection of words, phrases, and some sen-

tences extracted out of the best Greek writers, and alphabetically digested. But these thirty-six books might have been reduced, according to Photius, to six or seven, by retrenching the author's useless digressions and repetitions. Philostratus speaks of one Aristænetus of Byzantium, who flourished under Commodus, and ranks him among the most eloquent men of his time. Athenæus, whose work, intitled, *Deipnosophista*, has reached our times, lived under Commodus; but did not begin to write, as we may be fully convinced from the liberty with which he speaks of him, till after his death (1). We have but an abridgment of his *Deipnosophista*, made, ac-

(1) Athen. lib. xii. Voss. Hist. Græc. lib. ii. cap. 15.

cording

Commodus being dead, and his body privately conveyed away, Lætus and Eclectus repaired to the house of Helvidius Pertinax, whom they judged the most deserving person in the senate, and the most worthy of the empire. As the death of the emperor was not publicly known, Pertinax, roused out of his sleep (for it was about midnight) by their entering his house, did not doubt but they had been commissioned by Commodus to murder him. However, he ordered his domestics to admit them into his room; and, upon their appearing, without rising from his bed, or betraying the least concern, he told them, that as Pompeianus and he were the only friends of M. Aurelius left alive, he had expected every day to fall a sacrifice to the cruelty of the tyrant; and, with great firmness, bid them put their orders in execution. Lætus, admiring his constancy and intrepidity, informed him, that the tyrant was dead; and that they were come to offer the empire to him, as the person in the senate the most worthy of that dignity. Pertinax, suspecting some treachery, even after they had acquainted him with all the circumstances of the death of the tyrant, dispatched some of his friends to the place where his body lay. Upon their return, no room being left for any farther doubt, he yielded to their intreaties, accepted the empire, and proceeded to the camp of the prætorian guards with Lætus their captain, causing, in the mean time, a report to be spread in the city, that the emperor was dead of an apoplexy, and that Pertinax had succeeded to the throne. The soldiers were greatly surpris'd to see him appear in the camp at that time of night; but Lætus, assembling them, declared, that the emperor being dead of an apoplexy, he brought them a new prince, the most deserving person in the senate, who, he was confident, would be received with great joy, and acknowledged by all the armies of the empire, since he had on every occasion given signal proofs of his courage, prudence, and other princely virtues.

Lætus and Eclectus offer the empire to Pertinax;

Pertinax himself spoke after Lætus, and, in his harangue, promised each soldier three thousand drachmas; which would have gained them immediately over to his interest,

according to Casaubon, at Constantinople five or six hundred years since. This writer is highly esteemed, and not undeservedly, by the admirers of Grecian antiquities. He published other works; but none of them have reached our times (2).

(2) Voss. Hist. Græc. lib. ii. cap. 15.

had he not added very unseasonably, that he hoped, by their means, to reform several abuses; for they concluded from thence, that he designed to restore the ancient discipline, and deprive them of many privileges, which had been granted by Commodus. • This declaration occasioned an universal discontent, which, however, they dissimbled for the present: a small number having, at first, saluted him with the title of emperor, the rest followed their example, took the oath of allegiance, and, after the usual sacrifices, accompanied him, crowned with laurel, to the senate; where he was received with the greatest demonstrations of joy by the new consuls Quintus Sotius Falco and Caius Julius Erucius, and by all the magistrates, and other senators, who had assembled upon the first news of the death of the tyrant. When the senators had resumed their places, Pertinax, before they had conferred upon him the title of Augustus, earnestly intreated them not to lay so heavy a burden upon him in his old age, but to choose some other more able to discharge such an important trust, and better qualified by his nobility and birth for so high a station ¹. He was not satisfied with begging them in general to elect another, but particularly named Acilius Glabrio, who had been twice consul, and pretended to derive his pedigree from Anchises, the father of Æneas, took him by the hand, and earnestly intreated him to accept the imperial throne; but Glabrio, and with him all the rest, declaring, that they would acknowledge no other prince but Pertinax, he was at last obliged to yield ¹.

*He accepts
the empire
against his
will.*

*He thanks
the senate.*

After the senate had saluted him with the title of Augustus, he returned them thanks in an oration suited to the occasion, which was received with loud acclamations by the senate and people, who came in crowds to pay their homage to the new prince, whom they highly esteemed and revered. The consuls pronounced, according to custom, his panegyric: after which Falco, who was one of them, upon the emperor's commending Lætus, captain of the guards, and owning himself indebted to him for the empire, is said by Capitolinus to have rebuked the prince with great freedom for countenancing the chief minister of the crimes of Commodus. Pertinax heard him without the least emotion, and only told him, when he had done speaking, that he was young, and had not yet learned to obey; that Lætus had put the orders of Commodus in execution against his own inclination, and shewn, as soon as he was

¹ Herod. lib. iv. p. 482—493. Dio, lib. lxxiii. p. 830. Vit. Pert. p. 55.

¹ Herod. Dio, *ibid.*

at liberty, to act without restraint, what were his private sentiments ^k. From the senate, the emperor went to offer the usual sacrifices in the Capitol, visited the other temples, and then, amidst the loud acclamations of the people, repaired to the palace, where he gave a magnificent entertainment, as it was the first day of the new year, to all the magistrates, and the chief men of the senate, pursuant to an ancient custom, which had been neglected by Commodus ^l.

Thus Pertinax began his reign, to the great satisfaction of Rome, and of all the provinces of the empire, where he was proclaimed emperor with extraordinary demonstrations of joy; no one doubting, that he would soon restore the state to its former lustre, and redress the abuses and disorders introduced by Commodus. He was born on the first of August of the year 126, the tenth of Adrian's reign, in a little village called Villa Martis, not far from Alba Pompeia, now Alba, in the duchy of Montferrat. He is commonly styled by historians, and in most inscriptions, Publius Helvius Pertinax. His father, Helvius Succellus, had either been a slave himself, or was the son of an enfranchised slave ^m, and followed the mean profession of drying wood and making charcoal. We are told, that he gave the name of Pertinax to his son, on account of his obstinately adhering, for some time, to the same calling, which, however, he was afterwards persuaded to abandon, and to keep a grammar-school in Rome. But that profession not answering his expectation, he engaged in a military life, and served first in Syria, in the reign of Antoninus Pius, as a common soldier; but was soon raised to the rank of centurion, by the interest of Lollius Avitus, or rather Lollius Gentianus, his father's patron.

The birth and education of Pertinax.

Having in that post distinguished himself under Lucius Verus, during the Parthian war, he was rewarded with the command of a cohort in Syria, and afterwards employed in Britain, Mœsia, Italy, and Germany, in which last country he commanded the Roman fleet. From Germany he was sent into Dacia, and there, upon some false information, deprived of his employment, whatever it was, by M. Aurelius, notwithstanding the esteem he had for him. Capitolinus writes, that he was governor of Dacia, and charged with aspiring to the empire. Be that as it may, M. Aurelius, being soon after convinced of his innocence, created him senator, honoured him with the ensigns of

His rise and preferments.

^k Vit. Pert. p. 55.

^l Herod. lib. ii. p. 494. Vit. Pert. p. 55.

^m Dio, lib. lxxiii. p. 831. Vict. Epit.

prætor, and gave him the command of the first legion, which he led against the Germans, who had conquered Rætia and Noricum. These countries he recovered in one campaign; for which eminent service M. Aurelius advanced him to the dignity of consul. He was afterwards sent into Syria against Avidius Cassius; and, upon his death, recalled from thence to guard the banks of the Danube, and command the army in Illyricum. Having acquitted himself in that office to the general satisfaction both of the Romans and Barbarians, he was afterwards preferred to the government of the two Mœsias, then to that of Dacia, and lastly to the government of Syria, which he held to the reign of Commodus, when he returned to Rome; but did not continue long there, being ordered by Perennis, who then governed with absolute authority, and suspected all men of merit, to quit the city, and retire to Liguria, his native country, where he lived like an exile three whole years; during which he embellished the place where he was born with a great number of fine buildings; but would not suffer his father's cottage, or rather shop, which stood in the midst of them, to be pulled down, or even altered. After the downfall of Perennis, he was, by Commodus, sent into Britain, to restore the ancient discipline among the troops in that province; a reformation which he accomplished, not without exposing himself to great dangers. He was recalled at his own request; and upon his return charged with the care of supplying the city with provisions; then appointed proconsul of Africa; and lastly, governor of Rome, which employment he held when Commodus was killed ^a.

His character.

The conspirators esteemed him, of all the men in Rome, the most worthy of the empire. And indeed he was, according to Herodian, in every respect well qualified for so important a trust, being a man of great wisdom, extraordinary valour, and a spotless character. Dio Cassius extols him on account of his mild temper, his goodness, and his application to business; and adds, that he was grave without being sullen, mild without weakness, prudent without craft, exact without affectation, frugal without avarice, and great without pride or arrogance. Aurelius Victor styles him a person thoroughly acquainted with mankind, and one who admired and imitated the manners of the ancient Romans ^o. The other Victor says, that he was an enemy to all pomp, and outward shew; that he received

^a Vit. Pert. p. 54, 55. Herod. lib. ii. p. 493. Dio, lib. lxxiii. p. 831. Vict. Epit.

^o Aur. Vict.

persons of every rank and condition with great affability, and treated them as his equals. Julius Capitolinus is the only writer who gives him but an indifferent character, and charges him with avarice, and want of sincerity; but that writer lived a hundred years after Pertinax, whereas both Dio Cassius and Herodian were personally acquainted with him. The emperor Julian charges him only with having been privy to the conspiracy^p; but even from that imputation he is cleared by the above mentioned writers.

As he found the treasury entirely exhausted, he ordered all the silver statues of Commodus, which had been pulled down by a decree of the senate, to be melted, and turned into money; and sold by auction all his concubines and catamites, his arms, his horses, his gold and silver plate, and all his rich moveables; among which particular mention is made of chariots so contrived, as to shew the hour, and measure the way^q. By these means he raised money enough to pay the prætorian guards what he had promised them, to discharge several debts contracted by Commodus, and to give a bounty to the people. At the same time he restored to the lawful owners whatever had been unjustly taken from them by Commodus, recalled such as had been banished for the pretended crime of treason, put them in possession of their estates, and punished, with the utmost severity, those who had been accessory to their misfortunes. He publicly declared, that he would accept of no legacies or inheritances from such as had children or lawful heirs of their own, saying, "I had rather be poor, than wallow in riches acquired by dishonourable methods." He abolished all the taxes laid by Commodus on the rivers, ports, and high-ways; and would not suffer his name to be set up, according to custom, in such places as belonged to the emperors, saying, that they did not belong to him but to the public^r.

*His conduct
and excellent
administration.*

Thus by the mildness of his government, by his equity and moderation, he gained the affections both of the senate and people; but by attempting to restrain the licentiousness of the prætorian guards, he offended both them and their commander Lætus, who at first had been so zealous in his cause. The private men, not doubting that he would restore the ancient discipline among them, had, three days after his accession to the empire, attempted to proclaim Triarius Maternus Lascivius, a senator of an illustrious family; but he, escaping from them while they were carrying

*The præto-
rianguards
dissatisfied
with him.*

^p Jul. Cæs. p. 14. ^q Vit. Pert. p. 56. ^r Dio, lib. lxxiii.
p. 832. Vit. Pert. p. 56—59. Herod. lib. ii. p. 496.

They revolt, and attempt to raise Falco to the empire.

him to the camp, fled to Pertinax, assured him of his loyalty, and then withdrew from Rome. This mutinous disposition obliged the emperor to confirm all the privileges which had been granted them by Commodus. However, he kept them to their duty, which they, inured to the licentiousness of the preceding reign, not being able to sustain, attempted to raise Falco, the consul, to the empire. Pertinax, who was then at Ostia giving the necessary orders for supplying the city with provisions, returned hastily to the palace; and, repairing to the senate, accused Falco, whom the senators would have condemned immediately as a traitor, and a public enemy: but Pertinax rising up, exclaimed, that in his reign no senator, however guilty, should be put to death; and publicly declared, that he forgave him freely. Falco, being thus dismissed, retired to his estate, where he lived in safety. Some writers pretend, that he was utterly unacquainted with the design of the prætorian guards, who had agreed to make him emperor, without imparting to him the resolution they had taken in his favour. However, the soldiers, highly exasperated against Pertinax, and secretly encouraged by Lætus, who did not think his former services sufficiently rewarded, began openly to mutiny, and declare that they would no longer obey the orders of Pertinax, nor acknowledge him for emperor. To exasperate them still more, Lætus caused some of them to be publicly executed, as privy to the late conspiracy; pretending, that he only executed the orders of Pertinax, though the prince was entirely ignorant of these proceedings.

Three hundred of them march to Rome, and enter the palace.

In consequence of this conduct the mutiny encreasing daily, on the twenty-eighth of March a body of about three hundred of the mutineers, more daring than the rest, leaving the camp, and passing through the streets of Rome with their drawn swords, went directly to the palace, which they entered without opposition, the emperor's freedmen and officers either abandoning the palace through fear, or treacherously opening all the gates. Pertinax, in the mean time, knew nothing of what passed, till his wife, in great terror, brought him intelligence, that the prætorian guards had revolted, and were already in the palace. The emperor forthwith dispatched Sulpicianus, his father-in-law, whom he had appointed governor of Rome, to appease the tumult in the camp, and ordered Lætus to oppose those who had entered the palace: but Lætus, covering his face, that he might not be known, instead of obeying the emperor's orders, retired to his own house. As the mutineers still advanced, some of the emperor's friends, who had remain-
ed

ed with him, advised him to retire, and conceal himself, till the people, by whom he was greatly beloved, could come to his assistance: but Pertinax rejected their advice, saying, that to save his life by flight was a thing altogether unworthy of an emperor. He therefore resolved to meet them in person, believing that, awed by his presence, they would return to a sense of their duty. Accordingly, he appeared unexpectedly before them; and asked them, without betraying the least fear or concern, whether they, whose duty it was to defend the emperor's person, were come with an intent to betray and murder him. At the same time he represented to them the heinousness of their crime, the ignominy which it would cast upon their memories, and the fatal consequences of so black a treason, with such spirit and energy, that many of them, moved by his words, began to sheath their swords, and retire: but a Tungrian named Tausius, darting his javelin at the emperor's breast, and crying out, "The soldiers send you this," the rest rushed on with great rage, and dispatched him with many wounds. The emperor made no resistance; but covering his head with his robe, and calling upon Jupiter the Avenger, fell a sacrifice to their fury. Eclectus alone remained with him, and endeavoured to defend him; but after having killed two of the soldiers, was himself run through, and fell by the side of his master, for whose safety he had sacrificed his life. The soldiers cut off his head, and carried it upon the point of a spear in triumph to the camp, whither they retired with great precipitation, before the people could assemble, who, they knew, would not fail to revenge the death of a prince whom they so tenderly loved.

The introduction of Pertinax.

His death.

It was no sooner known that Pertinax had been murdered, than the enraged populace flocked from all quarters of the city; and uttering dreadful menaces against the authors of his death, ran up and down the streets in quest of them. The senators were no less concerned for his death than the people; the more, because they were now convinced, that the soldiers would suffer none to reign but tyrants. However, as they had more to lose than the common people, they did not offer to revenge his death; but either shut themselves up in their own houses, or in those of the soldiers of their acquaintance, thinking themselves there most safe. Such was the unfortunate and much-lamented end of Publius Helvius Pertinax, after he had lived sixty-six years, seven months, and twenty-six or twenty-eight days; and reigned, according to Dio Cassius, eighty-seven days,

He is universally lamented.

• Dio, p. 834, 835. Herodot. lib. ii. p. 498. Vit. Pert. p. 58.

*Honours
paid him
after his
death.*

that is, from the first of January to the twenty-eighth of March^c. His body, together with his head, was interred with great pomp by Didius Julianus, his successor, in the burying place of his wife's family. The emperor Septimius Severus, with the title of emperor, assumed the name of Pertinax, which he knew would, above any thing else, recommend him to the army in Illyricum, and to the Roman people. He punished with great severity all those who had been accessary to his death, disbanded the prætorian guards, honoured his memory with a most magnificent funeral, at which was carried the effigies of the deceased prince, pronounced his panegyric, and caused him to be ranked in the number of the gods, appointing the son chief-priest to his father. The day of his accession to the empire was yearly celebrated with the Circensian games; and his birth-day, for many years after, with other sports^d. He performed great things, says Herodian, during his short administration, and would have restored the empire to its former lustre, had he been indulged with a longer reign.

*The empire
exposed to
sale;*

Pertinax had dispatched Flavius Sulpicianus, his father-in-law, to appease the tumult in the camp of the prætorian guards; but in the mean time, the news of his death reached the camp, and the three hundred soldiers arriving soon after with his head stuck on a spear, Sulpicianus was not ashamed to apply to the murderers of his son-in-law for the empire, and to offer to purchase it with money: but they resolved to make the most of it, caused it to be proclaimed on the ramparts of the camp, that the empire was exposed to sale, and the best bidder should have it. When news of this scandalous proclamation were first brought to Rome, Didius Julianus, the wealthiest man in the city, was entertaining some of his friends at a banquet, who, in the midst of their mirth and jollity, advised him, as he had more ready money than any man in Rome, not to lose the opportunity of making so valuable a purchase. Julianus ravished with the dazzling prospect of rule and empire, followed their advice, rose from table, and hastened to the camp; where he began to canvass: he represented to the soldiers, whom Sulpicianus was haranguing in his own behalf, that his competitor, should he succeed, would not fail one day to revenge the death of his son-in-law; and he gave it them under his hand, that if they favoured him (Didianus) on this occasion, he would restore all things to the condition they were in under Commodus. This promise pleased the licentious and dissolute soldiery, who had com-

^c Dio, lib. lxxiii. p. 834.
Herodot. p. 495.

^d Viâ. Epit. Vit. Pert. p. 59.

mitted, in that prince's reign, every kind of disorder with impunity.

However, they would hear what they both offered, and suffered them to bid against one another, Sulpicianus in the camp, and Julianus at the gate; till the latter, rising at once from five thousand drachmas a man to six thousand two hundred and fifty, to be immediately paid, silenced the other, was admitted into the camp, and proclaimed emperor, on condition that he should forgive his competitor, and never resent his aspiring to the empire ^w. M. Didius Severus Julianus, was descended from an illustrious family, originally from Milan, in which city his grandfather was born. The emperor was the son of Petronius Didius Severus, and Æmilia Clara, the grand-daughter of the celebrated civilian Salvius Julianus, who flourished under Adrian, and compiled the Perpetual Edict. He was born on the twenty-ninth or thirtieth of January, in the year 133, the sixteenth of Adrian's reign, and brought up by Domitia Lucilla, the mother of M. Aurelius. That prince, who had a particular affection for him, created him first quæstor, then ædile, afterwards prætor; and when the time of his prætorship expired, gave him the command of the twenty-second legion, then quartered in Germany. He afterwards appointed him governor of Belgic Gaul, where, with the few forces he had under his command, he repulsed the Chauci, who had made an irruption into the Roman territories; for which service he was rewarded with the consulship. After he had discharged that office, he was sent into Illyricum, which country he defended with great valour against the neighbouring Barbarians; and was, on that account, preferred to the government of Lower Germany; whence he was recalled to Rome, and charged with the care of supplying the city with provisions ^x. He narrowly escaped death in the reign of Commodus, being accused as a confederate to the pretended conspiracy of Salvius Julianus, his uncle by the mother, and was for some time confined to the city of Milan: but Commodus, ashamed of having caused so many other senators to be inhumanly massacred, not only discharged Julianus, but preferred him to the government of Bithynia, and afterwards to the consulship, in which he had Pertinax for his colleague, whom he succeeded in the proconsulship of Africa. Hence Pertinax used to call him his colleague and his successor; which appellation was afterwards interpreted as a presage of his being succeeded by Julianus in the empire.

and purchased by Didius Julianus.

His extraction and preferments.

^w Dio, p. 835. Herodian, p. 499.

^x Spart. in Jul. p. 60.

His character.

All authors agree, that Didius Julianus was possessed of immense wealth; but are divided with respect to his character. Dio Cassius, who had been named by Pertinax to the prætorship, charges him with avarice and gluttony, and paints him as one who was wholly intent upon amassing riches by any means, however shameful and unjust. He spoke without judgement, says that writer, and uttered such things in public as excited the compassion of all sensible men. He was a great encourager of disturbances and troubles in the state, and is supposed to have privately excited the soldiers against Pertinax, though his nephew had married that prince's daughter. Dio Cassius adds, that he himself, in pleading, had often reproached him in public with his notorious injustice^y. Herodian writes, that he was generally despised on account of his disorderly life, and that he thought of nothing but his pleasures and diversions^z. Spartian, on the other hand, tells us; that, in all his governments and employments under M. Aurelius, he acquitted himself with great integrity; from which, however, he was said to have swerved in the reign of Commodus. He adds, that he was so covetous, as not to allow himself sometimes any other food than roots and greens; a charge which is directly contrary to what we read in Dio Cassius and Herodian, writers who lived at that time in Rome. Spartian, however, owns, that Julianus was charged with eating and drinking to excess, with gaming, and using such weapons as were peculiar to the gladiators, though, in his youth, he had never been addicted to any of these vices^a. He shewed himself, according to that writer, kind, affable, and obliging to all men; and was so far from being elated with his new dignity, that, on the contrary, he seemed rather to debase himself too much.

He takes the name of Commodus.

As soon as he was declared emperor, he appointed, at the request of the prætorian guards, Flavius Genialis and Tullius Crispinus their commanders. At the same time he accepted the name of Commodus, which they besought him to take upon him; and this name is still to be seen on some of his medals^b. After the usual ceremonies, the prætorian guards accompanied him in battle array to the senate. The people did not offer to oppose their march; but no acclamations were heard; some, who were at a distance, even uttered invectives against his person. As for the senators, those who were the most grieved to see him emperor, were the most forward in congratulating him with feigned joy

^y Dio, lib. lxxiii. p. 835.
^b Birag. p. 262.

^z Herodian, lib. ii. p. 498.

^a Ju-

on his accession to the empire. Among these was Dio Cassius the historian^c. Julianus made a speech in the senate, says Dio, who was present, worthy of himself; wherein he desired them to confirm what the soldiers had done, wishing to hold the empire of them; but told them at the same time, that he was the fittest person they could choose. The senate immediately passed a decree, declaring him emperor, and his family patrician, investing him with the tribunitial and proconsular powers. At the same time his wife Manlia Scantilla, and his daughter Didia Clara, were honoured with the title of Augustæ. From the senate he repaired to the palace^d, where, despising the frugal supper which had been prepared for Pertinax, he ordered a splendid feast to be got ready, and passed the night in mirth and jollity, leaving the body of the deceased prince in a place where he had been murdered. However, it was afterwards honourably interred.

He is acknowledged by the senate.

Next morning, the senate and the Roman knights coming to congratulate him, he received them in a most obliging manner. He went afterwards to the senate, and returned them thanks for having admitted him to administer, in conjunction with them, the sovereign power, and for the honours they had conferred on his wife and daughter. On this occasion he received, according to Capitolinus, the title of Father of his Country, which, however, does not appear on any of his medals. From the senate he went to the Capitol to offer the usual sacrifices, the senators, who attended him, outvying one another in demonstrations of joy. But the people, strangers to dissimulation, openly loaded him with curses and reproaches, hoping by these execrations to oblige him to resign the power which he had purchased of the soldiery in so shameful a manner. They even discharged showers of stones at him, and loudly wished, as he was sacrificing in the Capitol, that he might never obtain any favour of the gods. The emperor endeavoured to appease them with great promises; but they answered boldly, that they scorned to receive any thing from such an usurper and parricide: insomuch that, to disperse them (for they blocked up the way), he was obliged to order the soldiers to fall upon those who stood nearest. They attacked them accordingly, and killed or wounded great numbers. This carnage exasperated the people to such a degree, that they all took arms; and, in the circus, where the emperor assisted at the public games, renewed their curses and imprecations both against him and the

He receives them in a very obliging manner.

He is hated, and openly cursed, by the people.

^c Dio, lib. lxxiii. p. 835, 836.

^d Vit. Pert. p. 61.

His government.

prætorian guards, imploring the assistance of the other armies and generals, namely, that of Pescennius Niger, who commanded a powerful army in Syria. All this insolence Julianus bore with great patience, says Spartian; and during his short reign, gave many instances of an extraordinary mildness of temper^c. He appointed Repentinus, his son-in-law, captain of the prætorian guards, in the room of Sulpitianus, father-in-law to the deceased emperor; and, to gratify the soldiery, re-established many things, which had been appointed by Commodus, and abolished by Pertinax.

Clodius Albinus, his extraction and preferences.

Among the many great generals who commanded at this time the Roman armies in the different provinces of the empire, the most famed were Pescennius Niger in Syria, Septimius Severus in Illyricum, and Clodius Albinus in Britain. Clodius Albinus was a native of Adrumetum in Africa, but descended from the Posthumian and Ceionian families, two of the most illustrious in Rome. His father, Ceionius Posthumus gave him the name of Albinus, because at his birth he appeared whiter than new-born children usually are, the Latin word *albus* importing *white*. He was brought up in Africa, where he studied the Greek and Latin languages, in which he was a perfect master. The ancients extol his knowledge and learning, and mention, with great commendations, a treatise, which he composed on agriculture. But his martial genius did not allow him to pursue the peaceable profession of letters. He entered into the service very early, and, by the interest of Lollius Serenus, Bæbius Mætianus, and Ceionius Posthumianus, men of rank, and nearly related to him, was first raised to the command of a troop of Illyrian horse, and soon after to that of the first and fourth legions. He commanded the army in Bithynia in the reign of M. Aurelius, and restrained them from joining Avidius Cassius, for which service he was rewarded with the consulship. In the reign of Commodus he was appointed governor of Gaul, where he gained great advantages over the Frisians, and other neighbouring nations. From Gaul he was translated into Britain, which government he held at this time^f. The emperor Commodus, suspecting that Septimius Severus, governor of Illyricum, and Nonius Murcus, who commanded an army in some other province, designed to revolt, in order to engage Albinus in his cause, wrote a letter to him, if Capitolinus is to be credited, allowing him to assume, if he saw occasion, the title of Cæsar, and all the ensigns of

^c Vit. Pert. p. 61.

^f Vit. Alb. p. 79—84.

that dignity; which he prudently declined, fearing to be involved in the ruin of that tyrant, which he apprehended every hour. The same writer adds, that, some time after, a false report of the death of Commodus being spread in Britain, Albinus, giving credit to it, encouraged his soldiers to abolish monarchy, and re-establish the ancient republican government; a step which gained him the affections of the senate, but provoked Commodus to such a degree, that he immediately appointed Junius Severus to succeed him in the government of Britain; but he did not arrive before the death of Commodus was publicly known in that province.

M. Aurelius had a particular value for him, and thought him^a well qualified, on account of his austerity and gravity, for the command of an army. His severity seems to have bordered upon cruelty; for he is said never to have pardoned the least fault, but to have crucified even the centurions, when he found them the least remiss in their duty. He was unjust to his domestics, insupportable to his wife, and surly and morose to all. He was very moderate in his dress, but quite otherwise in his repasts; for he had such an extraordinary appetite, that he is said by Capitolinus to have often eat at a breakfast five hundred figs, a hundred peaches, ten melons, twenty bunches of grapes, a hundred beccaficos, and four hundred oysters¹. Sometimes he abstained altogether from wine, and sometimes drank to excess, even in time of war. He was far from being chaste, but abhorred and punished with the utmost severity all sorts of unnatural lust. Notwithstanding his many vices, he was a man of great courage and skill in military affairs, and commonly called a second Catiline. The harangue he made to his troops in Britain against monarchy, gained him the affections of the senate so highly, that no prince, says his historian, was ever so much revered by the fathers.

His character.

Caius Pescennius Niger Justus, as he is styled on some medals², as descended of an equestrian family, and born at Aquinum. He had but a small estate, and little learning; but nevertheless raised himself from the degree of a centurion to the first military employments in the empire. He had a command in Gaul, where he contracted a great friendship with Septimius Severus, at that time governor of the country round Lyons, who recommended him to the emperor Commodus. He was afterwards made consul at the request of his own troops¹. Herodian calls him a gallant soldier, an excellent officer, an experienced

Pescennius Niger, his extraction, preferments, and character.

^a Vit. Alb. p. 79. rag. p. 264.

^b Idem, p. 83.

¹ Spart. in Nigr. p. 75.

² Idem, ibid.

³ Bi-

general, an illustrious consul, and an unfortunate emperor^a. He kept the soldiers to their duty, and would not suffer them to exact any thing from the people, nor allow the officers to oppress the soldiers, upon any account whatever. He caused two tribunes to be stoned for having deducted a very inconsiderable sum from the pay of the men under their command, and condemned ten soldiers to be beheaded for stealing a fowl; but the whole army interceding in their behalf, he spared their lives, and only obliged them to pay to the countryman the price of ten fowls. He would not allow his soldiers, while they were in the field, to drink wine, nor to use plate, nor have any gold or silver about them when they went to battle, that the enemy might not, in case of a defeat, adorn themselves with their spoils. He suffered no bakers to follow the army, obliging the soldiers to content themselves with biscuit. Some troops that were in garrison on the frontiers of Egypt, having one day asked permission to drink wine, he returned them no other answer, than that they were but at a small distance from the Nile. He required nothing of the soldiers but what he practised himself. In his garb and dress he little varied from a common man, and his diet was the same with that of the meanest in the army. He always led the march on foot, with his head uncovered, in all seasons and climates. He obliged even his own domestics to carry burdens on their backs, that they might not appear to walk at their ease, while the soldiers were loaded with their arms and baggage.

*Septimius
Severus,
his cha-
racter.*

Severus was a person endowed with extraordinary talents, and in every respect infinitely superior both to Albinus and Niger. He was generally esteemed, and not undeservedly, the most active, vigilant, laborious, and enterprising man in the whole empire; inured to labour, indefatigable in every duty of war, equal to the greatest commanders of ancient times, well acquainted with civil affairs, ready in foreseeing events, dextrous at concerting schemes, a constant friend, a dangerous enemy, and equally violent in his love and hatred. He was a great dissembler, full of deceit, and ever ready to sacrifice his reputation and every thing else, to his interest and ambition^a. He was naturally inclined to cruelty and avarice, but more to cruelty; for we find some instances of his generosity, but none of his humanity: indeed, he is said never to have pardoned a fault, or performed a good-natured action^c. He was as

^a Herod. lib. iii. p. 501.

^b Dio. lib. lxxiii. p. 837. & lib. lxxvi. p. 869. Herod. lib. ii. p. 503. Vict. Epit. Tertull. Apol. cap. 4.

^c Herod. lib. iv. p. 527.

enemy to all pomp and shew, frugal in his diet, contenting himself in general with roots and greens, but sometimes, though seldom, drinking to excess. In the field his diet was the same with that of the common soldiers; he shared all their labours, and encouraged them more by his example than by words, to bear with patience the toils of war, which, notwithstanding his severity, gained him the affections of the soldiery. Severus was born at Leptis, a city of Libya Tripolitana; but his ancestors had been Roman knights, and afterwards admitted into the senate; for he was nephew, by the father, to two consuls, M. Agrippa, and Septimius Severus; the latter having twice borne that dignity. His father, M. Septimius Geta, had another son, named likewise Geta, and a daughter; but neither her name, nor that of her son, have been transmitted to us.

His extraction,

Severus was born on the 11th of April, in the eighth year of the reign of Antoninus Pius. He studied first in Africa, and afterwards at Rome, the Greek and Latin tongues; declaimed in public when only eight years old; applied himself to the study of philosophy and eloquence; and excelled, according to Spartian, Aurelius Victor and Eutropius in every branch of polite literature. Dio, on the contrary, relates, that he had more inclination than ability to learn the liberal arts. And Spartian owns, that he spoke to the end of his life the Latin tongue with the African accent¹. He was instructed in the knowledge of the law, together with Papinianus, by Q. Servidius Scaevola, who published various books of jurisprudence, whereof some fragments are still preserved in the Pandects. He seems to have had, likewise, some knowledge of physic, and is said to have been thoroughly acquainted with judicial astrology, a science to which the Africans were generally addicted². In his youth he was accused of adultery, but acquitted by Didius Julianus, at that time proconsul of Africa.

education,

Afterwards he came to Rome, where, after he had pleaded for some time with indifferent success at the bar, he was, by the interest of his uncle Septimius Severus, admitted by the emperor M. Aurelius, into the senate, and appointed governor of the island of Sardinia; whence he was sent to command the troops in Africa, in quality of lieutenant to the proconsul. Upon his return from Africa, he was created prætor; and, after his prætorship, was preferred to the command of the fourth legion, then quartered in Syria. On his journey into that province he visited the

and employments.

¹ Spart. Vit. Sev. p. 64. Dio in Excerpt. Val. p. 742.
Sev. p. 71.

² Get. Vit. p. 90. Dio, lib. lxxvi. p. 866.

⁴ Vit.

city of Athens, and received some affront, for which, when emperor, he deprived the inhabitants of many privileges granted them by his predecessors. He was afterwards raised to the government of Gallia Lugdunensis, or the country of Lyons, where, by his affability and obliging behaviour, he gained the affections of the people. From Gaul he was removed to Pannonia, which province he ruled with proconsular authority, as he did afterwards that of Sicily. Upon his return to Rome he was accused of having consulted the astrologers about attaining the empire; but as Commodus began then to be universally detested, he was acquitted, and his accuser crucified. He was raised soon after to the consulship, and then appointed commander of all the troops employed in Illyricum to defend the banks of the Danube * (S).

Yr. of Fl. To resume the thread of our history. While Didius Julianus was endeavouring to gain the affections of the Roman people by the mildness of his government, news were brought him, that Pescennius Niger had revolted in Syria, and was acknowledged emperor by all the Eastern nations, and the troops under his command. He received the like intelli-

2541.
A. D. 193.
U. C. 941.

* Vit. Sev. p. 64, 65. Herod. lib. ii. p. 503.

(S) Upon the death of his first wife Martia, he espoused Julia, a native of Emesia in Syria, for no other reason than because the astrologers had told her, that she was to marry a sovereign. She is styled in several inscriptions, "Julia Domna Augusta, the mother of armies, of the senate, of her country, &c. (1)" By her Severus had Bassianus, commonly known by the name of Caracalla, born the 4th of April, 188, Geta, born in Milan, the 27th of May, 189, and two daughters, who were married after their father's accession to the empire. Julia dishonoured with her lewdness her husband and family. She was likewise accused of conspiring against

her husband, and charged with several other crimes by Plautianus, who did all that lay in his power to disgrace her with the emperor; insomuch that, to retrieve her reputation, she attached herself to the study of philosophy, and kept continually about her a great number of sophists, philosophers, mathematicians, geographers, and persons eminent in the various branches of learning; which has rendered her name famous in history (2). Julia had a sister named Mæsa, married to Julius, who had by her two daughters, Soëmis and Mamea, the former the mother of the emperor Heliogabalus, and the latter of Alexander, who succeeded him.

(1) Spanh. lib. vi. p. 628.
i. cap. 3. & Soph. 56. p. 617.

(2) Philost. Vit. Apoll. Tyan. lib.

gence from Illyricum, where Severus had been saluted by the army, which he commanded, with the title of Augustus. The armies in Gaul likewise swore allegiance to him, as soon as they heard that he had taken upon him the title of emperor. Their example was followed by all the armies, provinces, and cities in Europe, except the city of Byzantium; so that Severus, having secured the provinces behind him, and left some troops to guard the banks of the Danube, began his march to Rome. As he was well apprised that Albinus, governor of Britain, was in a condition to oppose his designs, he wrote a flattering letter to him, wherein he declared his intention of adopting him, and gave him the title of Cæsar, which Albinus assumed at the head of his army, with all the ensigns of his new dignity, bestowing, on that occasion, great encomiums on Severus. Severus did not even attempt to gain Niger, or rather deceive him, well knowing that he would not listen to any proposals whatever^t.

Pescennius Niger declared emperor in the East, and Severus in Illyricum.

Julianus, in the mean time, repairing to the senate, caused Severus to be declared an enemy to his country, and the same sentence to be pronounced against his soldiers, on condition they did not abandon him within a limited time. Deputies were sent by the senate to persuade the soldiers to quit the party of Severus, and join Julianus. Among these was Vespronius Candidus, a consular of great authority, Valerius Catulinus, who was preferred to the command of the troops which Severus had with him, and Aquilius, a centurion, the chief minister of the cruelties of Commodus, with orders to dispatch Severus as soon as he should be deserted by his troops. But the deputies, instead of exhorting the army to abandon Severus, joined him, and encouraged the soldiers to pursue their march, and revenge the death of Pertinax. In consequence of this defection Julianus, having first paid the prætorian guards the largess he had promised that body, ordered them to their arms, and at the same time sent for the marines on board the fleet at Misenum, who together formed a considerable army. But as they had been long accustomed to idleness, they scarce knew how to use their arms, and shewed great backwardness to make head against the enemy, who were advancing with long marches. Those forces were received every-where with loud acclamations, and supplied with plenty of provisions, upon their proclaiming that they were going to revenge the death of Pertinax, a prince who had been universally beloved. Julianus, finding he could not depend

Severus declared a public enemy.

In his march to Rome he is every-where received with loud acclamations.

^t Dio, lib. lxxiii. p. 837. Herod. lib. ii. p. 513.

upon his troops, caused the palace to be fortified, as if he could have maintained himself there after losing all the rest. At the same time he ordered Marcia and Lætus, the chief authors of the death of Commodus, to be murdered, not doubting that they favoured Severus. He dispatched a great number of assassins to kill Severus, with promises of immense rewards if they succeeded in the attempt; and caused an incredible number of children to be inhumanly butchered, in order to make use of their blood in the abominable mysteries of magic *.

*Makes
himself
master of
Ravenna.*

*Julianus
causes Se-
verus to
be declared
his partner
in the em-
pire.*

While Julianus was thus idly and infamously employed, Severus, arriving at Ravenna, made himself master of that city, and the fleet riding there; an event which so terrified Julianus, that, distrustful of his troops, he ordered the senate to assemble on the 29th of May, when one of his ministers besought them in his name to send out the Vestals to meet the enemy, and intreat them to retire. This proposal being rejected as no less ridiculous than ineffectual, Julianus, as some authors write, was so provoked, that he assembled his troops, with a design to put all the senators to the sword, if they did not comply with his request. But he soon changed his purpose, and went to the senate in person, with a proposal of a quite different nature, which was, that they would pass a decree, declaring Severus his partner in the empire. The decree passed without opposition, and was immediately sent to Severus, who not only rejected the offered association, but, at the instigation of Julius Lætus, ordered Tullius Crispinus, captain of the prætorian guards, who had brought the decree, to be cut in pieces, a report being spread, that Crispinus had private orders to dispatch Severus. Julianus being thus rejected, and the senate declining to assist him with their advice, he ordered the gladiators at Capua to take arms, under the command of Lollianus Titianus, and wrote an obliging letter to Pompeianus, the son-in-law of M. Aurelius, who then led a retired life at Terracina, offering to take him, as he was an excellent commander, for his partner in the empire. But Pompeianus wisely declined the offer, pleading his old age, and the weakness of his sight; which, however, would have served him well enough, says Dio Cassius, had he seen any effectual means of relieving his distressed country *.

*Julianus
abandoned
by all.*

In the mean time the troops sent by Julianus into Umbria, to guard the passes of the Apennine mountains, declared for Severus; and the prætorian guards themselves,

* Dio, p. 838. Vit. Jul. p. 62.
Vit. Jul. p. 63.

* Dio, in Excerpt. Val. p. 729.

abandoning the emperor whom they had chosen, agreed not to oppose Severus, upon his promising them impunity, provided they delivered up to him those who had murdered Pertinax *. Julianus seeing himself thus deserted by his troops, shut himself up in the palace with Genialis, one of the captains of the guards, and Repentinus his son-in-law. The guards, in the mean time, having seized such of their comrades as had been concerned in the death of Pertinax, acquainted Messala with the transaction, who had been substituted either to Falco or Erucius; the ordinary consuls of this year 193. Messala immediately assembled the senate, when a decree passed depriving Julianus of the empire, sentencing him to death, declaring Severus emperor, and appointing divine honours to Pertinax. This decree was carried to Severus by some of the chief men in the senate, who intreated him, in the name of the rest, to hasten his march to Rome. At the same time the fathers sent a band of soldiers to the palace, with orders to put Julianus to death; whom they found drowned in tears, and ready to resign the empire upon condition that they spared his life. Some authors write, that, at the sight of the armed band, he only said, "What crime have I committed? whose life have I taken away?" Others tell us, that he implored the mercy of Cæsar, giving that title to Severus. Be that as it may, his head was struck off by a common soldier, and his body, according to Aurelius Victor, exposed to public view. Such was the end of Didius Julianus, after he had lived sixty years, four months, and as many days, and reigned two months and six days. Severus, upon his arrival at Rome, delivered his body to his wife and daughter, by whom it was buried in the tomb of his ancestors on the Via Lavicana, about five miles from Rome †.

Severus declared emperor, and Julianus degraded by the senate, and put to death.

Severus received the news of his competitor's death, when he was some days journey from Rome. However, he pursued his march with his troops in order of battle, and encamped every night, as if he had been in an enemy's country; precautions which filled the city with terror and distraction. The senate deputed a hundred persons of great distinction, out of their body, to congratulate him upon the death of his rival, and his accession to the empire. Severus received them in his armour, at the head of his troops, and caused them to be searched, as if he suspected their fidelity; but afterwards entertained them in a very familiar and friendly manner, presented them with seven hundred

A hundred senators sent to meet Severus.

* Herod. p. 510. Jul. p. 66.

† Dio, p. 838.

‡ Dio, p. 868. Vit.

pieces of gold, and gave them liberty either to depart immediately, or stay, and return with him to Rome. He appointed Flavius Juvenalis captain of the guards, with Veturius Macrinus, whom he had named before to that employment. At the same time he dispatched an express to Plautianus, enjoining him to seize the children of Pescennius Niger, and of all the officers who served under that general. He had the good fortune to intercept several letters and edicts sent by Niger to the senate and people of Rome, which he would not suffer to be read ^a. When he approached the city, he caused all those who were concerned in the death of Pertinax to be executed; and sent orders to the other soldiers of the guards to meet him without their arms, and in the attire which they wore when they attended the emperor in the great solemnities. His orders were obeyed, the guards imagining that they were to wait in that dress the emperor's entry. When they arrived in the camp, Severus commanded them to remain in a body, till he was at leisure to receive and harangue them; and, in the mean time, gave private orders to his own troops to surround them at a distance, and enclose them on all sides, while they were intent upon hearing his harangue.

He disbanded all the prætorian guards.

He then ascended the tribunal; and, expressing great anger and resentment in his countenance, reproached them in most bitter terms for murdering their prince, and such a prince as Pertinax; for selling by auction, to the eternal ignominy of the Roman name, the empire; and even for abandoning, like so many cowards and traitors, Julianus, whom they had themselves elected. He told them, that he could inflict no punishment upon them answerable to the enormity of their crimes; that, nevertheless, he granted them their lives; but commanded them instantly to quit their horses, and all their military badges, and retire without delay a hundred miles from Rome, solemnly declaring, that whoever among them should be found within that distance of the city, should be publicly executed. They were thunderstruck with this order; but forced to comply with it, being surrounded on all sides by the armed troops of Severus, who obliged them to quit their horses, and stripped them even of their tunics. Thus stripped and degraded, they retired with that shame and confusion which were justly due to the heinousness of their offences ^b.

His entry into Rome.

Severus entered Rome, attended by all his troops under arms, and with the standards of the prætorian guards re-

^a Vit. Sever. p. 66, & Nigr. p. 75. Herodian, lib. iii. p. 526.

^b Herodian, p. 510. Dio, p. 839.

versed. He advanced to the gate on horseback, and in his military habit; but there took his gown, and made his entry on foot, accompanied by the senators in their robes, with crowns of laurel on their heads; which the people likewise wore, who, on this occasion, were all clad in white. The streets through which he passed were strewed with flowers, the houses adorned, and covered with rich tapestry, and the whole city perfumed with sweet odours. Severus, having visited the Capitol, and the usual temples, retired to the palace; but the soldiers, taking up their quarters in the temples, porticos, and other public buildings, spread themselves all over the city, and committed great disorders, threatening to plunder the citizens houses, if they were not plentifully supplied with provisions. This violence alarmed the people, and inspired them with a great aversion to the new emperor. Next morning Severus went to the senate, attended by all his troops under arms; but he had scarce begun to speak, when he was interrupted by dreadful cries of the soldiers without, demanding an immense sum of the senate, which had been formerly given to the troops that had attended Augustus to Rome, and was consequently, said they, due to them also. The senate, altogether unapprised of the cause of that uproar, was struck with horror and dismay. The emperor himself betrayed some apprehension: however, starting up, he went out to them; but could not appease the mutinous multitude, without promising part of what they demanded, that is, two hundred and fifty drachmas a man, instead of two thousand five hundred. Then, returning to the senate, he excused himself for having assumed the title of emperor without their consent, pretending, that he had done it purely to revenge the death of Pertinax, and deliver them from the tyranny of Julianus. He promised to govern with great moderation, and tread in the footsteps of M. Aurelius and Pertinax, adding a solemn oath, by which he bound himself to the observance of all the laws; and particularly swore, that no senator should, for any crime whatever, be put to death in his reign, who had not been first tried and condemned by the senate: he also obliged the senate to pass a decree, declaring such emperors as acted otherwise, those who obeyed them therein, and their children, public enemies. This conduct gave great satisfaction to the generality of the senators; but men of discernment, and such as were better acquainted with his dark and reserved temper, with his falshood and dissimulation, gave no credit to his

The soldiers mutiny.

The emperor's speech to the senate.

fair promises; but, on the contrary, considered him as a second Tiberius ^d.

*The title of
Cæsar con-
firmed to
Albinus.*

However, they unanimously conferred upon him all the titles peculiar to the imperial dignity, vested him with the tribunitial and proconsular powers, and created him high pontiff. Severus acquainted the senate with his having bestowed on Albinus the title of Cæsar. He begged they would confirm it to him, caused several medals to be struck with his name, and statues to be erected in honour of that associate. He distributed large sums among the soldiery and people, which are confirmed by several medals of this year; but what chiefly gained him the hearts of the people, was his consecrating, and inrolling with extraordinary pomp and solemnity, the emperor Pertinax in the number of the gods. This apotheosis, perhaps the most magnificent that had ever been seen in Rome, is described at large by Dio Cassius ^f. Before Severus left Rome, to march against Niger, he caused the senate to proscribe all the friends and adherents of Julianus; executed without mercy such of them as were discovered and seized; and even attempted, from hatred to that prince, to abolish the decrees of the celebrated civilian Salvius Julianus, his great-grandfather.

*The friends
of Julianus
proscribed.*

*New præ-
torian
guards
chosen.*

In the next place, he chose new guards in the room of those whom he had cashiered, and considerably increased the number; a measure which filled Rome with soldiers, and proved very chargeable to the state; for their pay much exceeded that of the other troops. Besides, the natives only of certain countries, namely, of Spain, Macedon, Noricum, and, above all, of Italy, had been hitherto admitted to serve in the guards; but Severus, without any regard to their countries, chose the most resolute and brave men in his army; and appointed, that, for the future, they should be always selected from among the other troops, by which means the guards, who lately had served only for shew, became the flower of the Roman forces; and the hopes of a less toilsome, and more honourable and advantageous warfare encouraged the rest to discharge their duty with more punctuality and exactness; while, on the other hand, the Italian youth, having no longer that resource, turned either robbers or gladiators: hence this regulation was not pleasing, either to the Romans, or to the other inhabitants of Italy ^g.

^d Vit. Sever. p. 66. Herodian. p. 512. Dio, lib. lxxiv. p. 640.
^e Birag. p. 268. ^f Dio, p. 840. ^g Herod. p. 512. Dio, lib. lxxiv. p. 840. & in Excerpt. Val. p. 733.

The emperor, having settled affairs in Rome, and supplied the city with great plenty of corn, proceeded in the beginning of July on his march into the East against Niger, whom he had never once mentioned during his stay at Rome. His troops mutinied the first day at Saxa Rubra, about nine miles from Rome; but the mutiny was soon quelled. He pursued his march with all possible expedition, having dispatched an express to the commander of the troops in Illyricum, enjoining him to hasten into Thrace, and wait for him there. He ordered Heraclius to attempt the recovery of Bithynia, which province had declared for Niger; and wrote to Albinus in Britain, to hold himself ready to march upon the first notice ^b.

Severus sets out against Niger.

In the mean time Niger, hearing that Severus had been acknowledged emperor by the senate and people of Rome, and was already advancing by forced marches against him, wrote to the governors of the provinces, instructing them to guard the narrow passes, especially that of mount Taurus between Cappadocia and Cilicia. He raised new forces in Antioch, and all the other cities of Syria; and sent deputies to demand succours of the neighbouring princes. He went in person to view the fortifications of Byzantium, in which city he placed a numerous garrison, looking upon it as a place of the utmost importance. From Byzantium he advanced to Perinthus, called afterwards Heraclea, where in a skirmish between his troops and those of Severus, whose party the city of Perinthus had embraced, a considerable number of the latter were slain, and, among them, several persons of great distinction. On this occasion the senate, to gain the favour of Severus, declared Niger a public enemy, and the same sentence was denounced against Æmilianus, then proconsul of Asia, a person of extraordinary talents, long experience, and generally esteemed the greatest statesman of his age ^c.

Niger prepares for war.

He is declared a public enemy.

In the following year Severus and Albinus were both consuls the second time, and Niger in all likelihood took upon him the same dignity; for, on some medals, he is styled consul ^k. We know nothing of what passed in the war between Niger and Severus, till the arrival of the latter before the city of Byzantium, which he invested; but, meeting with a vigorous resistance from the numerous garrison, he left some of his troops before the place, and ordered the rest to cross the sea, and march towards Cyzicus, in the neighbourhood of which city they were opposed by

^a Vit. Sever. p. 67.
^p 76. Dio, in Excerpt.

ⁱ Herod. lib. ii. p. 512, 513. Nigr. Vit.
^k Birag. p. 264.

Yr. of Fl. *Æmilianus*, at the head of a powerful army. A battle ensued, in which much blood was shed on both sides; but *Æmilianus* was in the end defeated, and obliged to take shelter first in *Cyzicus*, and afterwards in another city not named in history, where he was taken, and put to death, by the generals of *Severus*; for the emperor himself was not present at the battle of *Cyzicus*¹.

^{2542.}
A. D. 194.
U. C. 942.

Æmilianus, Niger's general, defeated, and slain.

Niger himself overthrown.

Another battle was fought between *Nicea* and *Cius*, two cities of *Bithynia*, which proved much more bloody than the former, *Niger* commanding his own troops in person, and *Candidus*, an officer of great experience, heading those of *Severus*. Both armies fought with a fury hardly to be equalled, as appears from *Dio Cassius's* account of the engagement; but *Niger*, in spite of his utmost efforts, was at last obliged to save himself by flight beyond the streights of mount *Taurus*; which he caused to be fortified and strongly guarded. After this victory, *Severus* offered to let *Niger* live in safety, provided he would lay down his arms, and disband his troops; terms which *Niger* seemed inclined to accept, but was diverted from it by *Aurelianus*, whose daughters were betrothed to his sons. He therefore retired to *Antioch*, in order to raise troops and money. In the mean time the cities of *Laodicea* and *Tyre* declaring for *Severus*, *Niger* detached against them a body of *Moors*, who pillaged the cities, put most of the inhabitants to the sword, and set fire to their houses, which were in great part consumed. In the mean time *Severus's* army, advancing to the foot of mount *Taurus*, was stopped and quite disheartened, at the sight of the strong works and the great number of troops that defended them; insomuch that, despairing of being able to open themselves a passage, they had some thoughts of returning; but an incredible quantity of rain, mixed with snow, falling in the night, the fortifications were entirely demolished next day by an impetuous torrent from the mountain. *Niger's* men being now persuaded that the gods favoured the enemy, fled with precipitation, and left *Severus's* troops to enter *Cilicia*, without farther opposition. *Niger* had already raised another army, consisting chiefly of the *Antiochian* youth, who were very zealous and sanguine in his cause, but utter strangers to military discipline. However, he placed them so advantageously, that, when they were attacked by the regular and well-disciplined troops of *Severus*, under the command of *Valerianus* and *Anulinus*, they not only repulsed them, but would have gained a complete victory, had it

¹ Vid. Sev. p. 67.

not been snatched out of their hands by a dreadful storm of thunder and lightning; which, discharging itself in their faces, prevented them from pursuing the advantage they had gained, and disheartened them to such a degree, that, no longer doubting that the gods were averse to their cause, they began to despair of success, and retire.

Mean while, Severus's troops, resuming their courage, renewed the charge, and gained a complete victory. This battle, by far the most bloody of the three, was fought on the very spot where Alexander the Great first vanquished Darius; that is, near the city of Issus, at a place called Pylæ Ciliciæ, or the Gates of Cilicia, a narrow plain on the confines of Syria and Cilicia, inclosed on one side by the sea, and on the other by steep mountains, on which Niger's forces were posted. Niger is said to have lost in this battle twenty thousand men. Of the loss on the side of Severus, no mention is made in history. Niger, after this defeat, retired to Antioch; but, not thinking himself safe in this city, continued his flight towards the Euphrates, with a design, as was supposed, of taking shelter among the Parthians; but those who pursued him, overtaking him at a small distance from Antioch, cut off his head, and carried it on the point of a spear to Severus, who caused it to be first shewn to the inhabitants of Byzantium, and then sent to Rome^m.

A third battle, in which Niger is utterly defeated.

Niger is slain.

Severus was not present at any of these battles; but, wherever he was (for, as to that particular, we are left by historians quite in the dark), he soon made all those who had joined his competitor feel the effects of his resentment. He put such of the senators to death as had served under Niger in quality of generals or tribunes. He spared the lives of the other senators, but banished them to the islands, and seized their estates. He caused an infinite number of other persons of an inferior rank to be publicly executed, without considering whether they had engaged in the war by choice or constraint. Many who had never seen Niger were involved in this general massacre of his friends and partisans (T). He punished with exemplary severity such cities

Severus punishes without mercy such as had sided with Niger.

^m Herod. lib. iii. p. 319, 320. Dio, lib. lxxiv. p. 843, 851.

(T) Herodian writes, that Severus persuaded Niger's generals, by means of their children, whom he had with him, to betray the cause which they had embraced; and, after gaining the victory by their treachery, murdered both them and their children (1). He first banished the wife and children of Niger,

(1) Herod. lib. iii. p. 321.

cities as had assisted Niger, especially Antioch, which he deprived of the privileges and title of a city, subjecting it as a mere village to Laodicea. However, next year, at the intreaties of his eldest son, then an infant, he reinstated Antioch in its former rights and privileges^a. He obliged such towns as had assisted Niger with money, though not by choice but constraint, to pay four times as much to him; an exaction which drew upon him the public hatred^c.

Yr. of Fl.

2543.

A. D. 197.

U. C. 945.

*He makes
war upon
the Adia-
benians,
Arabians,
and Par-
thians.*

The next consuls were Scapula Tertullus and Tineius Clemens; during whose administration Severus, passing the Euphrates, reduced the inhabitants of Osrhoene and Adiabene; who, taking advantage of the late disturbances, had murdered the Roman soldiers left among them, and shaken off the yoke^b. He likewise entered Arabia; for the Arabians also had either revolted, or joined Niger, but were obliged to submit to Severus. He likewise made war upon the Parthians; but did not bring them under subjection, as Spartian pretends^d. For these wars the senate decreed him the titles of Arabicus, Parthicus, and Adiabenicus, which, with that of imperator the fifth time, are given him in the inscriptions of this year 195, the third of his reign. He refused the triumph which was also decreed him, that he might not appear to have triumphed for victories gained in a civil war. The title of Parthicus he like-

^a Herodian. lib. iii. p. 523. Vit. Caracal. p. 85. ^c Dio in Excerpt. Val. p. 737. ^b Dio, lib. lxxv. p. 848. ^d Spart. in Vit. Sever. p. 67.

and afterwards caused them, and all his family, to be murdered, and their estates to be confiscated. Spartian names six illustrious persons of the Pescennian family, who were put to death by his orders (2). However, he would not suffer a pompous inscription on the basis of a statue of Niger at Rome to be erased, saying, "Let the world know what an enemy I have conquered (3)." The house of Niger was still standing in Dio-clesian's time, as Spartian informs us; and, in one of the rooms, his statue done to the life in the black marble of

Thebes, with an epigram on the basis to this purpose: "Here stands the great Niger, the terror of Egypt, the ally of Thebes, who had proposed a golden age to all. Kings, nations, Rome itself, loved him. He was dear to both the Antoninuses, and to the whole empire. As his name was Niger (that is *black*), we have caused a statue to be erected to him in black marble, that it might answer his name." This statue was, as Spartian informs us, a present from the king of Thebes to Statius Posthumius (4).

(2) Sev. Vit. p. 69.

(3) Nig. Vit. p. 79.

(4) Idem ibid.

p. 76—79. Herod. lib. iii. p. 521. Sev. Vit. p. 69.

wife rejected, lest his assuming it should provoke the Parthians. The Scythians designed to make war upon him, and had already began their march; but were deterred from putting their designs in execution by a dreadful storm, in which three of their chiefs were struck dead with lightning.

In the beginning of the following year, when Cn. Domitius Dexter, governor of Rome, was consul the second time, with L. Valerius Messala Thrasea Priscus, the city of Byzantium surrendered, after a three years siege (U). This city Niger had seized at the first breaking out of the war. He placed a numerous garrison in it, and supplied the inhabitants with great store of warlike machines, most of them invented and constructed by Periscus, a native of Nicæa, the greatest engineer of his age. Severus besieged this place when he first arrived in Thrace, left a considerable body of troops to carry it on, and, after the defeat and death of Niger, prosecuted it with the greatest part of his army by land, and by sea with all the ships he could assemble from the different ports of Asia. The Byzantines defended themselves, before the death of Niger, and even after his head had been exhibited to them, with such resolution and intrepidity, as can hardly be expressed. They baffled all the attempts of the assailants, killed great numbers of them, crushed such as approached the walls with huge stones, and, when the stones began to fail them, with the statues of their gods and heroes; but, at last, they were constrained by famine, after having been reduced to the fatal necessity of devouring one another, to submit, and open their gates to the conqueror, who put all the magistrates and soldiers to the sword, but spared the engineer Periscus. The city, with its stately theatres, baths, and public buildings, was laid in ashes; the inhabitants were stripped of all their effects, and publicly sold for slaves, and the walls levelled with the ground; those walls, says Dio Cassius, which were the strongest rampart of the Roman empire against the incursions of the Barbarians. After

The city of Byzantium taken,

and destroyed.

^r Dio, lib. lxxiv. p. 849.

^s Herod. lib. iii. p. 523.

(U) It was at this time by far the greatest and the most populous and wealthy city of Thrace, fortified with walls of an extraordinary height and breadth, and defended by a great number of towers, seven of which were built with such art, that the least noise heard in one of them was immediately conveyed to all the rest (5).

(5) Dio, lib. lxxiv. p. 847.

the surrender of Byzantium, Severus sent his army, divided into three bodies, under the command of Lætus, Anulinus, and Probus, to reduce part of Mesopotamia; and the country they conquered was made by Severus a new province, Nisibis being declared the capital. The government of this province was, like that of Egypt, given only to Roman knights¹.

*Severus
resolves to
destroy
Albinus.*

After these successes, Severus began to think of destroying Albinus, whom he had lulled asleep with the title of Cæsar, while he was employed against Julianus Niger. Albinus being as much beloved by the senate as Severus was hated on account of his cruelty, many persons of great distinction solicited him to come to Rome, and assume the title of emperor. Severus was informed of these practices; however, not judging it prudent to declare himself an open enemy to a person of such interest, had recourse to treachery. He wrote a pompous letter to the senate in his commendation, and another to Albinus himself, filled with the most tender expressions of friendship, calling him his dearest and entirely beloved friend, his brother, his partner in the sovereign power; but those who brought him this letter, had secret orders to draw him aside, under colour of communicating in private some affairs of the utmost importance, and dispatch him with their daggers. They were likewise provided with poison, in case the other method should not be judged practicable. After Albinus had read the letter, the assassins, pursuant to their directions, informed him, they had something to communicate which required the utmost secrecy. Albinus desired them to attend him into a gallery; but, observing that they took more than ordinary care to prevent others from entering with them, he suspected some treachery, and caused them to be seized, and put to the torture, when the violence of the torments extorted from them a full confession of the errand on which they were come.

*Sends assassins to
murder
him.*

*Albinus
causes him-
self to be
proclaimed
emperor.*

In consequence of this discovery, Albinus, having assembled a powerful army, caused himself to be proclaimed emperor in Britain, and thence passed over into Gaul, where he was joined by many persons of great distinction. Severus, upon the first intelligence of his revolt, leaving the East, hastened through Thrace and Illyricum into Gaul. Some writers relate, that, before he set out on his march, he caused a young virgin to be sacrificed, hoping to learn from the state of her entrails what success would attend him in this war². At Viminacium, a city in Upper Moe-

¹ Dio, lib. lxxiv. p. 847—850.

² Suid. p. 257.

sia on the Danube, he gave the title of Cæsar to Bassianus his eldest son, and on that occasion distributed large sums among the soldiers. At the same time he obliged his son to quit the name of Bassianus, and style himself thenceforth M. Aurelius Antoninus, for whom Severus ever had a great esteem and veneration *. Before he reached Gaul, several skirmishes happened between the troops that had declared for him in that country, and those of Albinus, in one of which, called by Herodian a battle, the generals of Severus were totally defeated, and their troops dispersed †. This check greatly alarmed him, and obliged him to quicken his march, after he had detached part of his troops to secure the narrow passes of the Alps, and prevent his competitor from entering Italy. In the mean time the senate declared Albinus a public enemy; after which declaration, Numerianus, who kept a grammar-school at Rome, flying into Gaul, passed himself upon the inhabitants for a senator sent by Severus to raise troops. Having by this artifice got together a considerable body, he attacked and defeated a detachment of Albinus's horse, and gained some other petty advantages; which Severus no sooner knew, than he wrote to him as a senator, believing him to be one of that body, commended his zeal, and commissioned him to levy forces. Having, therefore, raised a small army, he continually harassed Albinus, took many prisoners, and intercepted a great sum of money, which he sent to Severus. When Albinus was defeated, Numerianus waited upon Severus, and informed him who he was; but despising the great riches and honours which the emperor offered him, he accepted only a small pension, and, retiring into the country, spent the rest of his life in quiet and solitude.

*Is declared
a public
enemy.*

In the beginning of the following year, when Lateranus and Rufinus were consuls, Severus, having passed the Alps in the midst of winter, approached Lyons, where Albinus then resided, with a design to enter Italy early in the spring. He was not a little alarmed at the sudden and unexpected arrival of Severus; however, having with incredible expedition collected his troops quartered in that neighbourhood, he fell upon Lupus, one of Severus's generals, and defeated him with terrible slaughter ‡. Severus then advanced in person against his rival; and, Albinus not declining the challenge, both armies, to the number of one hundred and fifty thousand men, were drawn up, on the nineteenth of February, in the neighbourhood of Lyons, probably in the

*Severus
marches
against
him.*

*The two
armies en-
gage near
Lyons.*

* Vit. Sever. p. 68.
p. 68.

† Herodian. lib. iii. p. 524. Sev. Vit.
y Dio, lib. lxxv. p. 851, 852.

*Severus in
great dan-
ger.*

spacious plain between that city and Trevoux. As the fate of the two commanders depended upon this battle, and no less a reward was proposed for the conqueror than the Roman empire; as the British legions were neither inferior in courage nor experience to those of Illyricum; and both armies expected to share the fortune, whatever it should be, of their generals; the engagement was one of the most obstinate and bloody recorded in history. After they had fought many hours with inexpressible fury, without any considerable advantage on either side, Albinus's left wing was entirely defeated, and obliged to take shelter in their camp, which the enemy entered in that confusion, and plundered; but on the other hand, his right wing, having drawn Severus's men into ditches, which they had covered with earth, gained so great an advantage over them, that the emperor himself, who flew to their assistance at the head of the prætorian guards, was put into the utmost confusion, and obliged, if we believe Herodian, to save himself by flight, after having quitted all the ensigns of the imperial dignity^a. Spartian writes, that he was wounded, and believed dead by the army, who were inclined to create another emperor in his room^b; and Dio Cassius affirms, that his horse was killed under him, and himself in imminent danger of losing his life^c. The same author adds, that, seeing his men fly, he threw himself sword in hand upon the fugitives, and forced them to return to the charge. Thus rallied, they fought with such fury, that the enemy, not able to withstand them, began to give ground; a circumstance which Lætus perceiving, fell upon them with the whole body of horse under his command, and completed their overthrow. Lætus had declined engaging as long as the victory continued doubtful, with a design, as was supposed, of claiming the empire, after the two parties had destroyed each other; and hence it was, that Severus, as Herodian informs us, instead of rewarding him, as he did his other generals, put him soon after to death.

*Albinus en-
tirely de-
feated, and
killed.*

*The cruelty
of Severus.*

Albinus's army, no longer able to keep the field, fled to Lyons, whither they were pursued by the conquerors; who, entering the city with the fugitives, first plundered, and then laid it in ashes^d. Albinus, who had concealed himself in a house on the Rhone, finding no means of making his escape, destroyed himself^e. Severus beheld with savage pleasure the dead body of his competitor; rode over it several times, causing his horse to tread it under-foot; left it

^a Herodian. lib. iii. p. 524.
p. 852.

^d Herodian. lib. iii. p. 524.

^b Vit. Sev. p. 63.

^c Dio,
Dio, p. 853.

lying in its gore before his tent, till it was half putrefied, and torn in pieces by the dogs; and then ordered the wretched remains to be thrown into the Rhone. The head he caused to be cut off, and sent to Rome, ordering it to be erected on a pole in the forum. He pardoned at first his wife and children; but soon after caused them to be inhumanly massacred, and their bodies thrown into the river. The whole family of Albinus, all his friends, and most distant relations, without distinction of sex or age, were by Severus's orders barbarously slaughtered, and their estates confiscated. Most of the great men of Gaul and Spain, who had shewn any attachment to Albinus, underwent the same fate. By means of these murders and confiscations, Severus amassed an immense treasure, enriched his soldiers, and, at his death, left incredible wealth to his children ^f.

After this victory, all the cities that had declared for Albinus, were soon reduced, and the inhabitants punished, some with death, some with the confiscation of their estates; so that Severus, seeing all quiet in Gaul, and likewise in Britain, which he divided into two provinces, set out for Rome, at the head of his victorious army. His approach filled the city with terror and dismay, those who had favoured Albinus expecting no better treatment than the friends of that unfortunate commander had met with in Gaul. However, as he approached, the senate went out to meet him, and received him with all possible demonstrations of joy, attended him to the Capitol, and thence to the palace, where he ordered large sums to be distributed among the people and soldiery. Next day he proceeded to the senate, and there read a speech filled with bitter invectives against the partisans of Albinus; produced the letters that had been written to him; commended the cruelties of Sylla, of Marius, and of Augustus, as necessary precautions; ascribed the ruin of Pompey, and the death of Cæsar, to their unseasonable clemency; and, mentioning Commodus, styled him a god, and bestowed the highest encomiums upon him; adding, that none but infamous and abandoned wretches could censure or blame the conduct of such an excellent prince ^g.

Having ended his speech, he returned to the palace, and filled the city with massacres and bloodshed. In a few days forty-two senators, most of whom had been consuls or prætors, were sacrificed to his fury and revenge, together with an incredible number of persons of an inferior rank. He

His cruelties in Rome.

^f Vit. Sever. p. 68.
^g & Sever. p. 68.

^g Dio, lib. lxxv. p. 526. Vit. Alb. p.

*Goes into
the East to
make war
upon the
Parthians.*

rodian tells us, that he cut off all those who, on account of their birth or riches, bore any weight in the senate, or the provinces. Many were condemned and executed upon bare suspicion, and many for no other crime but that of being possessed of great wealth under a covetous and inhuman tyrant¹. While the city was yet floating in blood, out of hatred to the senators he forced them to rank Commodus with the usual ceremonies among the gods, to appoint priests, and institute an annual festival to his honour. He condemned Narcissus, the famous wrestler, who had strangled Commodus, to be devoured by wild beasts; and spared none who were suspected of having been privy to his death. After Severus had spent some months at Rome, and cut off not only the partisans of Albinus, but likewise all such as gave him the least umbrage, he took leave of the senate, and, with his two sons Caracalla and Geta, departed for the East, with a design to make war upon the Parthians, who, under the conduct of their king Vologeses, had subdued great part of Mesopotamia. He embarked with his army at Brundisium, and, arriving in Syria, marched immediately to Nisibis in Mesopotamia, whence the Parthians retired upon the first news of his approach.

Yr. of Fl.
2546.
A. D. 198.
U. C. 946.

*He takes
Seleucia,
Babylon,
and Ctesiphon.*

In the following year, Tib. Saturninus and C. Gallus being consuls, Severus, having made vast preparations for the war against the Parthians, began his march about the end of the summer, judging autumn the most proper season for that expedition. He followed the course of the Euphrates, the greater part of his army being conveyed in boats, and the rest marching on the banks of the river. In order to pass from the Euphrates into the Tigris, he caused the canal Naarmalcha to be cleansed; and by that conveyance arrived in a short time at Seleucia and Babylon, both which places he found abandoned by the enemy, and took without opposition. Thence he advanced to Ctesiphon, the metropolis of the Parthian dominions; which he invested, and reduced after a laborious siege, during which his soldiers, for want of provisions, were obliged to feed upon such roots as they found in the fields; a scarcity which occasioned various distempers in the army: however, the place was in the end forced to surrender; but the king, who had shut himself up in it, found means to make his escape, attended by a small body of horse; a circumstance which was a great disappointment to Severus. The emperor gave up the city to be plundered by the soldiers, who put all the men to the sword; but spared the women and children, whom, to the

¹ Dio, p. 853. Herodian. p. 527.

number of one hundred thousand, they sold for slaves. After the reduction of Ctesiphon, Severus gave the senate a pompous account of his exploits, which he caused to be represented in painting, and exposed to public view. The senate decreed him a triumph, and honoured him with the title of Parthicus Maximus; which is to be seen on several medals of the next and following years ¹ (W). While Severus was thus employed in the East, some disturbances arose in Britain, where the Caledonians, taking up arms, invaded the Roman dominions, committing every where dreadful ravages. Lupus, whom Severus had appointed governor of Britain, not finding himself in a condition to make head against that warlike nation, was forced to purchase a peace, and, with large sums, redeem the Roman territories from their daily incursions ².

Disturbances in Britain.

In the following year, when P. Cornelius Aullinus, and M. Aufidius Fronto were consuls, Severus, on his return from Syria, attacked the city of Atræ, Barsæmus, king of that place, having formerly sent considerable succours to Niger; but was obliged to abandon the enterprize, after having lost a great number of men, and most of his warlike engines ¹. About this time Severus caused two officers of great distinction to be put to death; namely, Julius Crispus, tribune of the prætorian guards, and Lætus, one of his most experienced generals; the former for saying, that Severus exposed his troops wantonly to dangers, and obliged them to undergo great hardships, only to satisfy his private ambition and vanity. Lætus's crime was, according to Herodian, his having acted with treachery in the battle of Lyons, as we have related above. After he had allowed some respite to his harassed troops, and amassed an

Lætus murdered.

¹ Herodian. lib. iii. p. 528. Dio, p. 854. Ammian. lib. xxiv. p. 278. Onuph. in Pass. Golitz. p. 85.

² Dio, p. 851, 866.

³ Idem, p. 844.

(W) Spartian tells us, that the army, in the transports of their joy for the reduction of Ctesiphon, proclaimed Caracalla, the emperor's eldest son, his partner in the sovereign power, and at the same time gave the title of Cæsar to his second son Geta; which honours were afterwards confirmed by the senate. Severus, not thinking it advisable either to

keep Ctesiphon, or pursue Vologeses, set out on his return into Syria about the beginning of winter, loaded with booty. He is supposed to have concluded a treaty with the Parthians; for we read of no wars between them and the Romans till eighteen years after, and Vologeses reigned peaceably to his death, which happened after that of Severus (1).

(1) Dio, lib. lxxv. p. 854.

immense

immense quantity of provisions and warlike engines, he returned to invest the city of Atræ; but all his efforts against that place proving unsuccessful, he was forced to raise the siege again, having lost, during the eighteen days it lasted, most of his machines, and an incredible number of men^m. Severus spent most part of the following year, when Tib. Claudius Severus was consul the second time, with C. Aufidius Victorinus, in searching after such of Niger's partisans as had not yet been discovered. Many persons of distinction, who believed themselves safe, were on this occasion seized, and condemned without mercy, those especially as gave the tyrant any umbrage on account of their birth or richesⁿ.

Yr. of Fl.

²⁵⁴⁹⁻

A. D. 201.

U. C. 949.

*Severus
visits Ara-
bia, Palæ-
stine, Egypt,
&c.*

Next year, when L. Annius Fabianus and M. Nonius Mucianus were consuls, Severus gave the manly robe to his eldest son, though he was then but fourteen years old, and named him consul with himself for the following year. They both entered upon their consulship in Syria; and on that occasion the emperor bestowed a largess on the soldiers. Severus went, during his consulship, into Arabia, and from thence into Palæstine, where he remitted the taxes with which he had loaded the inhabitants for their steady adherence to Niger. While he was in Palæstine, he published an edict, forbidding, under the severest penalties, the subjects of the empire to embrace either the Jewish or Christian religion; a decree which gave rise to the fifth general persecution^o. From Palæstine he passed into Egypt, where he visited the tomb of Pompey the Great; and then pursued his route to Alexandria, to which city he granted a public council or senate; a mark of distinction which they had often solicited in vain of other emperors. During his residence in Egypt, he visited all the cities, and viewed, with great attention, the curiosities of that ancient kingdom, especially the pyramids, the labyrinth, the statue of Memnon, &c. (X)

The next consuls were Septimius Geta, the emperor's brother, and Fulvius Plautianus, his great favourite. Some

^m Dio, lib. lxxv. p. 555.
lib. vi. cap. 2.

ⁿ Vit. Sev. p. 69, 70.

^o Euseb.

(X) He examined with great care the books he found in the temples, and caused those which contained any secret knowledge, to be conveyed into the sepulchre of Alexander the Great, which he ordered to be shut up, that no one might, for the future, either see the body of that prince, or peruse those books (1).

(1) Dio, in Excerpt. Val. p. 737. Vit. Sev. p. 70.

writers call Plautianus the emperor's kinsman; others say, *Plantianus* that he was only his countryman, being a native of Africa. *his chief favourite.* Be that as it may, all agree, that he was of a very mean descent; and some add, that in his youth he had been banished for exciting and heading the populace in a sedition. However, the emperor favoured him above all the great men in Rome, and not in conversation only, but in public. In his speeches to the senate and people, he extolled him more than Tiberius had ever praised his favourite Sejanus. He created him captain of the prætorian guards, and shared with him the power and wealth of the empire; for Plautianus was said to be possessed of as great riches as Severus himself, and thought to be no less powerful; at least more deference was paid to his power than to that of the emperor. The senators and soldiers swore by the Fortune of Plautianus; public vows and sacrifices were offered for his safety, as if he had been actually emperor; and Rome was filled with his statues, mostly erected by the authority of the senate. His table was better served than the emperor's, and his equipage far more magnificent. As there was no access to honours but through his favour, his house was constantly crowded with senators, knights, and great part of the people, all soliciting for admission to Plautianus, who was more difficult of access than the emperor. Geta, the brother of Severus, and the empress Julia, stood no less in awe of him than the rest, well knowing, that his authority was of far greater weight than their's. This exorbitant power was most notoriously abused by the favourite minister, who condemned, banished, and even put to death, many illustrious persons, whom he hated or suspected, without consulting the emperor, and without his knowledge; for though whatever the emperor said or did was immediately carried to Plautianus, yet Severus was quite unacquainted with the crimes and arbitrary proceedings of his minister; and hence esteeming him as a man without reproach, he continued to heap upon him all sorts of honours. He had already distinguished him with the consular ornaments, and created him senator, without removing him from the command of the prætorian guards; and this year he not only appointed him consul, but to the great surprize of Rome, and the whole empire, declared his intention of marrying his eldest son Caracalla to Fulvia Plautilla, the daughter of Plautianus; a match that took place accordingly this year, soon after his return to Rome; for having settled the affairs in the East^p, he arrived unexpect-

His great power.

Severus marries his son Caracalla to the daughter of Plantianus.

^p Herod. lib. iii. p. 529.

His generosity to the people and soldiery.

edly at Rome about the latter end of May, and, according to Herodian, entered the city in triumph.

The emperor, upon his return, distributed immense sums among the soldiers and people, ten pieces of gold a man more than any other private prince had ever been known to give; and added to this extraordinary bounty magnificent shews, which lasted seven days⁹. When the shews were over, the nuptials of Caracalla and Plautilla were celebrated with the utmost pomp and magnificence (Y). About this time Severus gave the manly robe to his second son Geta, who had entered the fourteenth year of his age^r.

Caracalla the occasion of his ruin.

L. Fabius Septimius Cilo being consul the second time, with L. Libo, the emperor, notwithstanding his great kindness for Plautianus, being offended at the great number of statues erected to his minister in all the public places of the city, caused some of them to be taken down. In consequence of this order, a report being spread, that he was disgraced, several governors of provinces, beholding him already as a public enemy, caused his statues to be pulled down in their governments; but paid dear for their over-hasty zeal, some of them being deprived of their employments, others tried by the senate, and exiled. Among the latter was Rocius Constans, governor of Sardinia, who was tried by the emperor in person, in conjunction with Dio Cassius, and several other senators. Severus, on this occasion, solemnly declared, that he would never suffer the least affront or injury to be offered with impunity to Plautianus; but nevertheless, before a year was over, he changed his sentiments, and suffered him to be executed in his presence. His ruin was chiefly owing to Caracalla, who, not able to endure the haughty and imperious temper of his wife Plautilla, hated both her and his father-in-law Plautianus, openly declaring, that if ever he obtained the sovereign power, they should both feel the effects of his resentment. Plautianus resolved to anticipate his intentions, not doubting but upon his death he should be able to seize the empire for himself, as Severus was now advanced in years, and troubled with the gout. In the mean time Geta, the

⁹ Dio, lib. lxxvi. p. 359, 360.

^r Vit. Sev. p. 69.

(Y) Dio Cassius writes, that what Plautianus gave his daughter on this occasion, would have been a sufficient dower for fifty queens; and adds, that he appointed an hundred persons

of good families to attend her, whom he had for that purpose privately caused to be made eunuchs, though some of them were married, and even had children.

emperor's

emperor's brother, being taken ill, and finding there was no hope of his recovery, desired to see Severus before he died, and acquainted him with the haughty, imperious, and tyrannical conduct of his favourite minister. Henceforth the emperor began to regard him with a jealous eye, and to lessen, by degrees, his exorbitant power. Plautianus perceiving his drift, resolved to exert the authority he still enjoyed, and secure, by the murder both of the emperor and his son, the sovereignty to himself; at least Saturninus, one of the tribunes of the prætorian guards, declared to Severus, that Plautianus had charged him to assassinate them both, and produced his orders in writing. Herodian¹ and Ammianus Marcellinus² seem not to question the truth of his deposition: but Dio Cassius considers the whole as a contrivance of Caracalla to destroy Plautianus.

They all agree, however, that Plautianus coming to the palace, and entering the emperor's room, where Caracalla then was, in order to clear himself from the crime laid to his charge, the young prince rushed upon him with great fury, seized his sword, which he wore as captain of the guards, and ordered those who were present to dispatch him, being prevented by the emperor, who began to relent, from killing him with his own hand. His body was thrown into the street; but soon after, by the emperor's order, interred³. Severus immediately assembled the senate; but without uttering any invectives against Plautianus, only lamented the unhappy lot of mankind, since some loved to excess, and others abused the love that was shewn them.

He is murdered by his order.

The next consuls were the emperor's two sons, Caracalla the second time, and Geta the first. During their administration, Severus continued either at home, or in the neighbourhood, and applied himself wholly to the administration of justice, which he performed with great impartiality, following the advice of the celebrated civilian Papinianus, whom he appointed captain of the guards; for at this time the chief employment of that officer was to decide law-suits with the emperor, or in his name. Papinianus, in the discharge of this important office, engaged as his counsellors Paulus and Ulpianus, two men eminently accomplished in the knowledge of the laws. As the empire now enjoyed a profound peace, Severus reformed many abuses; but is condemned by most of the ancients, on account of his excessive severity, especially by the emperor

Papinianus made captain of the guards.

Severus reforms several abuses, enacts good laws, &c.

¹ Herod. lib. iii. p. 531, 533, 534. p. 161.

² Dio, lib. lxxvi. p. 261.

³ Ammian. lib. xxix.

Julian,

Julian, who thinks his cruel inflexibility, as he styles it, his greatest fault *; for he never pardoned the least transgression. He enacted several laws, which are highly extolled by the writers of those times, as equally just and necessary. Many of them are still extant in the Code. He allowed no power to his freedmen; nor would he suffer the senate to distinguish them with any honours. He chose men of unblemished characters for governors of the provinces, and was always ready to hear with great patience the complaints of his people. No prince ever managed the public money more frugally; and by these means he left the exchequer exceeding rich at his death, though he had found it quite empty, and had been engaged in several expensive wars. When he died, corn was found in the public granaries sufficient to supply the city for seven years, and oil in the store-houses, which he built at a vast charge, for the consumption of five years, reckoning not only the city of Rome, but all the places in Italy that produced no oil. He even left sufficient to supply for ever the indigent people of Rome with a certain quantity of oil every day, which was in part sent yearly by the inhabitants of Libya Tripolitana. They willingly submitted to that burden out of regard to Severus, who was a native of the same province, and had obliged them, by utterly extirpating a neighbouring nation; that often invaded their country, and laid waste their fields †. But this contribution proving in process of time very burdensome to them, was remitted by Constantine. Severus repaired most of the public edifices, and raised an incredible number of new structures in Rome, in Antioch, in Alexandria, in Byzantium, and in most of the great cities of the empire.

*Several
senators
put to
death.*

The following year, when Nummius Albinus and Fulvius Æmilianus were consuls, was remarkable for the death of many illustrious senators, inhumanly massacred by the emperor's order. Among these were Quintillus Plautianus and Apronianus, persons of unblemished character, and of great authority in the senate, but hated by the emperor for their illustrious birth, and extraordinary accomplishments. They were both accused of having consulted the astrologers about the death of Severus, and their own fate; and condemned, without even being heard. Bæbius Marcellinus, another senator of great distinction, was condemned by the senate, and that instant hurried to execution, upon the deposition of a single evidence, who charged him with having listened while Apronianus was consulting the astrologer.

* Jul. Cæs. p. 14. Vit. Sev. p. 71. † Ibid. p. 67. Dio, p. 869.

The evidence had been suborned by Pollonius Sebennus, who was himself soon after condemned at the instance of the people of Noricum, whom he had tyrannically oppressed, while he governed that province¹. The following year, when Aper and Maximus were consuls, the northern inhabitants of Britain invaded the Roman territories, and, putting to flight the legions that guarded them, committed every where dreadful ravages. Virius Lupus, then governor, or, as Ulpian calls him, president of Britain, not thinking himself in a condition to withstand the enemy, retired before them; and, in the mean time, acquainted the emperor with the state of affairs in that province; who, apprehending that the whole island, unless awed by a powerful army, would soon revolt, and shake off the yoke, resolved to go thither in person. Accordingly, having made the necessary preparations for this expedition, he set out for Britain on the ensuing year, while his two sons were consuls, Caracalla the third time, and Geta the second. Before he left Rome, he vested his son Geta with the tribunitial power, and conferred upon him the title of Augustus, which he had bestowed three years before on his eldest son Caracalla; so that there were now three Augustuses at one time, a circumstance which had never happened before. The emperor took both his sons with him, being glad of that opportunity to remove them from Rome, where they abandoned themselves to idleness and debauchery.

The Britons revolt.

Geta vested with the tribunitial power, and declared Augustus.

The Britons were no sooner informed of his arrival in their island, than, dreading his power, they sent ambassadors, offering to submit upon honourable terms. Severus detained the deputies till he was ready to take the field; and then dismissed them, without granting their request. He passed the first winter, it seems, in the southern parts of Britain, whence he marched early in the spring of the ensuing year, when Pompeianus and Avitus were consuls, against the Mæatæ, who bordered on the Roman dominions, and the Caledonians, who dwelt more to the north. No battle was fought in this expedition; but nevertheless, partly by the enemy's ambuscades, partly by the hardships the Roman soldiers underwent, and the toils they endured in cutting down woods, building bridges, and draining marshy grounds, fifty thousand of them are said to have perished². Herodian writes, that the Caledonians incessantly harassed the army on their march, attacked them unexpectedly, cut many thousands of them in pieces, and

Yr. of Fl. 256. A. D. 208. U. C. 956. Severus's expedition into Britain.

¹ Dio, in Excerpt. Val. p. 741, &c.

² Dio, lib. lxxvi. p. 867.

*He over-
runs the
whole
island.*

then retired into their fens and woods, which were inaccessible to the Romans ^a. The emperor, though advanced in years, and troubled with the gout, pursued his painful march, surmounting with great cheerfulness all difficulties, till he reached the most distant and northern coasts of the island, laying the country waste with fire and sword; inasmuch that the Caledonians were at last obliged to purchase a peace, by yielding to the Romans part of their country, and delivering up their arms. Having thus concluded a pacification with the Caledonians, he returned to the southern parts of Britain, where he left his son Geta to administer justice during his absence. For this expedition he was honoured by the senate with the title of Britannicus Maximus, and his two sons with that of Britannicus ^b.

*His wall
in Britain.*

Severus spent great part of the following year, when Man. Acilius Faustinus and Triarius Rufinus were consuls, in building a wall in Britain from sea to sea, to secure his conquests, and part the Roman territories from those of the more northern Britons not subject to Rome (Z). The wall being finished, he retired with his army to Eboracum, now York, where he was seized with a lingering distemper, occasioned by his grief and affliction for the wicked life of his eldest son, who, notwithstanding the extraordinary affection Severus had ever shewn him, had, during the late expedition, with an impious boldness hardly to be equalled, attempted to murder him in the sight of the whole army.

*Caracalla
attempts to
murder his
father.*

While the emperor, at the head of his troops, was concluding a treaty with the Britons, and receiving their arms, Caracalla, who stood behind him, drawing unexpectedly his sword, in the sight both of the Roman and British army, advanced to stab him; and would have put his wicked design in execution, had he not been deterred by the outcries of those who stood next the emperor. Severus, turning about that instant, saw his son with a naked sword in his hand; but, without betraying the least surprize, or uttering a single word, pursued the business in hand, received the arms of the Britons, and signed the treaty. When he re-

^a Herod. lib. iii. p. 867.

^b Goltz. p. 88. P. Pagi, p. 207.

(Z) Though the place where this wall was erected has been disputed by authors and antiquaries, it is now generally allowed to have been the same whereof the remains are still to

be seen, running parallel with Adrian's Vallum from Boulness, in the neighbourhood of Carlisle, to Cozen's House, at a little distance from Newcastle upon Tyne (1).

(1) Vide Horsley's Britann.

turned

turned to his tent, he sent for his son, and, in the presence of Papinianus, captain of the guards, and Caster, his chief chamberlain, first reproached him with his black and wicked attempt; then offering him a drawn sword, "If your ambition to reign alone prompts you (said he) to imbrue your hands in the blood of your father, execute your impious purpose rather in this place than in the sight of the whole world, and in the presence both of our friends and enemies: if you are not yet abandoned to such a degree, as to murder your father with your own hand, order Papinianus to commit the parricide: you are emperor; he must obey you." We do not find that Caracalla was touched with remorse, or at all affected by this pathetic address.

In the following year, when Gentianus and Bassus were consuls, the Mæatæ and Caledonians, understanding that the emperor was indisposed, and not in a condition to take the field, without any regard to the late treaty, flew to arms; and, assembling their forces, attempted to pass the new wall, and invade the Roman dominions; an insult which so provoked Severus, that he ordered Caracalla to lead the whole army against the enemy, and, entering their country once more, to put all to the sword, without distinction of sex or age. The young prince, seeing himself, contrary to his expectation, intrusted with so great a command, made it his whole study to corrupt the officers and soldiers, with a design to depose his father. Many tribunes and centurions, hearkening to him, publicly declared, before the army set out from York, that they would no longer obey an old man, worn out with infirmities, lame, and disabled by the gout from marching at their head, and discharging the duties of an emperor. These murmurs were soon carried to Severus, who, immediately ordering the army to assemble, caused himself to be placed upon his tribunal; whence, in most bitter terms, he reproached with folly, ingratitude, and treachery, such of the officers as had seconded the wicked attempts of his son; ordered them all to be beheaded that instant in his presence; and then, addressing himself to the army, struck with terror and dismay at the sight of so many executions, asked them with an imperious and majestic air, whether they were not yet satisfied that the head ruled, and not the feet.

After this execution, his distemper being greatly increased by the uneasiness of his mind, he was soon reduced to the last extremity; when he sent for his two sons, caused

The Mæatæ and Caledonians revolt.

Caracalla attempts to depose his father.

His distemper increased with the uneasiness of his mind.

^c Dio, p. 868.

^d Vit. Sev. p. 71. Aur. Vict.

the speech of Micipsa to his children, in Sallust, to be read to them, exhorted them to concord and unity, and recommended this tyrannical maxim, to enrich the soldiers, and gain their affections, without caring whether they were beloved or hated by the rest of their subjects *. When he found his end approaching, he cried out, "I have been every thing, and every thing is nothing †." Then ordering the urn to be brought, in which his ashes were to be inclosed, on seeing it, "Little urn (said he), thou shalt contain one for whom the whole world was too little." Before he expired, he ordered the golden statue of Fortune, which always stood in the emperor's apartment, to be carried into the rooms, first of his eldest, and then of his youngest son. As his pains increased, especially in his feet, he called for poison; but no one daring to administer it, he is said to have glutted himself with coarse meats, which soon put a period to his life ‡. He died at York on the fourth of February of the year 211, after having lived, according to Dio Cassius, sixty-five years, nine months, and twenty-five days, and reigned seventeen years, eight months, and three days. His body was burnt at York with great solemnity, and his ashes were conveyed by his two sons to Rome, in a golden urn, or, as others assert, in one of porphyry. It was received in all the provinces with extraordinary pomp, and deposited at Rome in the stately mausoleum of the emperor Adrian. He was soon after ranked among the gods, with the usual ceremonies. Severus was, without all doubt, a person of most extraordinary parts; but all his good qualities were eclipsed by his excessive cruelty, and insatiable avarice. Some writers endeavour to excuse his cruelty, which they soften with the name of severity; and pretend, that, without violent remedies, the many evils that had long prevailed in the state could never have been rooted out. It was said of him, if Spartian is to be credited, as it had been formerly said of Augustus, that he ought never to have been born, or never to have died. He was, according to the same writer, greatly esteemed, and generally loved, after his death, when no one dreaded his cruelty, and all felt the effects of his excellent regulations (A). But, after all, the most we can say in his commendation

Yr. of Fl.
2559.
A. D. 211.
U. C. 959.

*Severus
dies.*

*His cha-
racter.*

* Dio, p. 368, 369.

† Vit. Sev. p. 73, 74.

‡ Vict. Epit.

(A) Galen tells us, that his greatest pleasure was to do good to all; and adds, that he kept constantly by him a great store

of treacle, and other expensive remedies, to relieve such as wanted them; by which means he saved the lives of many persons;

mendation is, that Severus deserves to be ranked among the great, but not among the good princes (B).

Se-

sons ; namely, of Antipater, his Greek secretary ; of the son of Piso, to whom Galen inscribed his treatise on treacle ; and of a lady of distinction, named Arria, for whom Severus had a particular value, because she applied herself to the study of philosophy (2).

(B) Among the writers who flourished at this time, we may reckon the emperor himself ; for he wrote the history of his own life, which was a kind of apology for his great severity. Spartan commends it as a sincere and impartial account of the transactions of his reign (3) ; and Victor speaks of it as an elegant and judicious performance. It has been long since lost. The sophist Antipater, a native of Hierapolis in Asia, wrote likewise the history of Severus's reign ; and was for that work first appointed the emperor's Greek secretary ; afterwards charged with the care of educating his two sons, Caracalla and Geta ; then honoured with the consulship ; and, lastly, preferred to the government of Bithynia ; from which employment he was soon removed, on account of his excessive cruelty (4). His history has not reached our times. Galen, the prince of physicians, was still alive in Severus's time ; for he lived, according to Suidas, seventy years (5). He was a native of Pergamus, and the son of Nico, a celebrated architect and geometrician. He was likewise

well versed in mathematics, and pretended to understand and teach the Greek tongue in its greatest purity. Diogenes Laertius, the author of the lives of the philosophers, comprised in ten books, flourished, according to Vossius, under Antoninus Pius ; but, according to Jonssius, whose conjectures seem to us better grounded, under Severus (6). Nestor, a native of Laranda in Lycaonia, flourished, according to Suidas (7), under Severus, and wrote several Greek poems. Pisander, who, in the reign of the emperor Alexander, wrote some histories, or rather fables, in Greek verse, was his son. Julius Titianus, the father of the orator of the same name, who was preceptor to the son of Maximinus, about the year 235, published many pieces greatly esteemed by the ancients ; and, among the rest, a description of all the provinces of the empire ; and a book of letters, in which he imitated the style of Cicero ; for he had an extraordinary talent in imitating the different styles of authors, and was thence called the ape of his time (8). C. Julius Solinus, whose description of the earth, under the title of Polyhistor, has reached us, flourished, according to some writers, under Severus. Under him also flourished Philostratus, author of the life of Apollonius Tyaneus ; which work he undertook at the request of the empress Ju-

(2) Galen. de Theriac. lib. ii. p. 457.

(3) Vit. Sev. p. 65.

(4) Herod. lib. ii. p. 514. Philost. Soph. 50. Galen. Ther. tom. ii. p. 458.

(5) Suid. p. 590.

(6) Jonf. lib. iii. cap. 12.

(7) Suid.

p. 211. (8) Voss. Hist. Lat. lib. ii. cap. 2.

*Is succeeded
ed by his
sons Caracalla and
Geta.*

*Their different tem-
pers.*

Severus was succeeded by his two sons Bassianus and Geta, whom he had invested with the sovereign power, during his life-time, and by his last will appointed to reign jointly after his death. The former, commonly known by the nickname of Caracalla, a Gaulish word for a kind of cassock used in Gaul, and by him first introduced among the Romans, gave in his infancy many instances of an extraordinary sweet and mild temper; but, as he grew up, abandoned himself to all manner of cruelty, and proved a most inhuman and bloody tyrant; whereas the latter, who in his tender years seemed no less void of humanity than his father, changed by degrees his temper, and became, through his affability, moderation, and complaisance, the darling both of the people and soldiery. They shewed from their childhood an utter aversion to each other, and were continually quarrelling, even in their common sports and diversions. This natural antipathy increased as they grew in years, notwithstanding the intreaties, rebukes, and exhortations both of their father and their preceptor Antipater, who were continually laying before them the many evils that must necessarily attend the division and disagreement of brothers. But all to no purpose; for Severus no sooner expired, than Caracalla endeavoured to have his brother excluded, by the officers of the army, from any share in the sovereignty; but the soldiers protesting that they would equally obey both the sons of Severus, since he had appointed both to succeed him, he was forced to acknowledge his brother partner in the empire, and suffer the soldiers to take the usual oath of allegiance to each.

*Caracalla
concludes a
shameful
treaty
with the
Britons.*

After this ceremony Caracalla led his army towards the borders of the Mæatæ and Caledonians, who had begun hostilities again; but, instead of attacking those warlike nations, he concluded a treaty with them, and withdrew his

lia, the wife of Severus. Photius commends the elegance and softness of his style; but thinks his construction not always agreeable to the rules of grammar (9). Besides the life of Apollonius, Philostratus wrote four books of pictures, or descriptions, a treatise on heroes, letters on friendship, and the lives of the sophists in four books. All these works have reached our times. Under Se-

verus lived two other writers of the same name; to wit, Philostratus, the son of Nervianus, to whom some writers ascribe the lives of the sophists; and Philostratus, a native of Lemnos, who wrote some descriptions: of these, the former was great-nephew, and the latter grandson, by the mother, to the author of the life of Apollonius (1).

(9) Phot. cap. 44. (1) Casaub. in Spart. p. 30.

troops from the forts erected in their country, and restored the lands which Severus had obliged them to abandon^b. Before he left Britain, he discharged Papinian, captain of the guards; caused Castor, his father's chamberlain and chief favourite to be executed, together with Evodius, another of the deceased emperor's freedmen, and formerly his own preceptor. He at the same time dispatched assassins into Italy to murder his wife Plautilla, Plautius her brother, and a celebrated charioteer, of the faction in the circus opposite to that which he favoured. Such was the beginning of the reign of Caracalla. The brothers left Britain about the middle of summer, and set out for Rome with their mother Julia, and the ashes of their deceased father. Caracalla attempted on the road to murder his brother Geta; which attempt increased their mutual animosities and jealousies to such a degree, that henceforth they both marched with their separate guards, and with no less wariness than if they had been in an enemy's country, lodging constantly in different houses, and carefully watching the motions of each other.

*Misunder-
standing
between
the two
brothers.*

They were received with great solemnity at Rome, where they performed, with extraordinary pomp, the obsequies of their father, and then withdrew to the palace, which they divided into two; for it was larger, if Herodian is to be credited, than any city in the whole empire, except Rome. This division between the two princes rent the whole city, and even the empire, into factions; insomuch that, to avoid the many inconveniences and disorders thence arising, a division of the empire was proposed. To this expedient they both attended; Geta, who loved a quiet life, declaring, that if Caracalla would but yield Asia and Egypt, he would retire to Antioch or Alexandria, and leave him in quiet possession of the rest of the empire. But this scheme was defeated by their mother Julia's throwing herself at their feet, and begging, with many tears, that they would divide her too between them. Towards the close of this year, Caracalla again attempted to murder his brother during the feast of Saturn; an outrage which occasioned almost an open war between the two princes, and a great deal of bloodshed^c.

*They are
received at
Rome with
great so-
lemnity.*

In the following year, when the two brothers Julius and Caius Asper were consuls, Caracalla, unalterably fixed in his wicked purpose of destroying his brother, pretended a desire of being reconciled with him, and, by means of their common mother Julia, invited him to an interview in her

^b Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 882, & seq. Carac. & Get. Vit. p. 87. & 91. Herodian, lib. iii. p. 539.—543. Dio, lib. lxxvii. p. 871.

Yr. of Fl.

2560.

A. D. 212.

U. C. 960.

Geta murdered in the arms of his mother.

chamber. Geta readily accepted the invitation, and repaired without guards to the appointed place, not suspecting the least treachery in a proposal which came from his mother, who loved him with great tenderness. But he had no sooner entered her chamber, than some centurions, whom Caracalla had found means to convey privately into an adjoining room, rushing in sword in hand, fell upon Geta and dispatched him, with many wounds in his mother's arms, who, endeavouring to save him, was also wounded (C). Such was the end of this unhappy prince, after he had lived twenty-two years and nine months, and reigned, from the death of his father, one year and twenty-three days¹. He no sooner expired than Caracalla, leaving the palace with great precipitation, flew through the city to the camp of the prætorian guards, pretending great fear and consternation, and crying out aloud that his life was in danger, and that a bloody conspiracy had been formed against him. Upon his arrival in the camp, he instantly went to the place where the ensigns and banners were kept, which was a kind of temple and asylum; and there throwing himself upon the ground, returned thanks to the gods for delivering him from such an imminent danger.

Caracalla gains the soldiery with an immense largess.

To the soldiers who crowded about him he expressed himself with the same ambiguity; but by degrees gave them to understand that he was sole sovereign, and in a condition to bestow upon them wealth and honours without controul. That they might immediately feel the effects of his generosity, he doubled their pay, and added a bounty of two thousand five hundred drachmas a man, which he gave them liberty to take that instant out of the public treasury. Thus were the prodigious sums, which his father had, by innumerable murders and confiscations, been accumulating for eighteen years, dissipated in one day. Caracalla having, by this extravagant reward secured the affections of the soldiery, told them, that his brother Geta had attempted to murder him, but had lost his life in the attempt. In consequence of this declaration he was saluted sole emperor by the whole army, and the unhappy Geta declared a traitor and a public enemy¹. There was at this time another camp

¹ Vit. Get. p. 91.¹ Dio, p. 872. Herod. lib. iv. p. 544.

Vit. Get. p. 91. & Carac. p. 86.

(C) Caracalla himself seems afterwards consecrated, in the temple of Serapis, the sword the blood of his brother; for with which he had murdered Dio Cassius tells us, that he him (1).

(1) Dio, p. 880.

in the neighbourhood of Alba, now Albano, where the murder of Geta was highly resented; but Caracalla soon appeased them, by exaggerating the pretended treachery of his brother, and promising them an immense donative. Caracalla passed that night in the camp of the prætorian guards, and next day went to the senate with a curias under his robes, guarded by all his troops, some of whom he even placed among the senators, to be ready to act in case any of them should attempt to revenge the death of Geta. His speech turned upon the wicked designs of Geta, whom he said he had slain unwillingly in his own defence, lessening the heinousness of his crime by the example of Romulus and others, who had revenged with death injuries offered them by their brothers. In withdrawing from the senate he pronounced aloud the following words: "I give leave to all those who are in banishment to return home; I except none, by what crimes soever they may have deserved punishment^m."

His speech in the senate.

From the senate he returned to the palace, leaning upon Papinian and Chilo; then he caused the body of his deceased brother to be conveyed with great pomp to the tomb of the Septimian family on the Appian Way; and, when the funeral ceremonies were over, prevailed upon the senate to rank him, with the usual solemnity, among the gods. Finding, upon his return to the palace, his mother Julia, bewailing with other women the death of her son, transported with rage, he ordered them to be put to death, but in the end, moderating his passion, he even shewed great kindness to Julia; ordering the same honours to be paid her as to himself (D). Among many illustrious persons whom the inhuman tyrant sacrificed to his rage and jealousy, as the friends of Geta, no one was more universally or more deservedly regretted, than the celebrated Papinian, the greatest civilian, in the opinion of Zosimusⁿ and Cujas^o, that ever lived. As Severus had recommended chiefly to his care his two sons, he spared no pains to reconcile them, and often defeated the wicked attempts of

Performs the obsequies of his brother, and causes him to be ranked among the gods.

Several illustrious persons put to death.

^m Vit. Car. p. 86.
Theod.

ⁿ Zof. lib. i. p. 637.

^o Cuj. in Cod.

(D) Dio Cassius writes, that he began this general massacre by ordering all his domestics, to the number of twenty thousand persons, to be inhumanly butchered. It was death to utter his name; inasmuch that no

one durst use it thenceforth, even on the stage, where it was commonly given to slaves. He likewise ordered all the money with his name to be melted down, and the inscriptions erased.

Caracalla;

*The death
of Papi-
nians,*

Caracalla; on which account he was reckoned among the friends of Geta. Besides, the tyrant desiring him, after the murder of his brother, to compose a speech for him, excusing the crime, which he designed to pronounce in the senate, Papinian, whose love for justice, to use the expression of Zosimus, was equal to his knowledge of it, answered with great firmness, "It is not so easy a thing to justify a parricide as to commit it; and it is a second parricide to defame an innocent person after having taken away his life." The emperor, provoked at this answer, ordered his head to be immediately struck off, and likewise his son's, who was then quæstor, and had only three days before exhibited magnificent spots^p. L. Fabius Chilo, another of Severus's great favourites, for whom Caracalla himself had a particular esteem (for he used to style him his true friend, his benefactor, his father), was in the next place doomed to destruction, for having, together with Papinius, endeavoured on every occasion to promote union and concord between the brothers. A tribune was sent, with a band of soldiers, to seize him in his house, drag him to the palace, and there butcher him in the presence of the emperor. But the people, and the city-guards, whom Chilo had commanded while governor of Rome, moved with compassion at seeing a person of his rank thus ignominiously treated by the insulting soldiery, like a common malefactor, rescued him out of their hands, uttering dreadful menaces against the authors of such outrages; which so alarmed Caracalla, that he declared he had given no such orders; and, to appease the multitude, caused both the tribune and soldiers to be immediately put to death^q.

*and of se-
veral
others.*

He spared Chilo, but vented his rage without controul upon many other illustrious persons, both of the senatorial and equestrian order, not pardoning any for whom either his father or brother had ever shewn the least kindness or esteem. Among these unhappy victims were a daughter of the emperor M. Aurelius, whom the other emperors had treated with the utmost respect, but Caracalla ordered to be strangled, for shedding a few tears when news were brought her of the death of Geta; Septimius Severus Afer, the son of Geta, brother to the late emperor Severus, to whom Caracalla had sent, the day before, a dish from his own table, as a token of his friendship; Pompeianus, who had been twice consul, had commanded armies in several wars, and was grandson to the emperor M. Aurelius, by

^p Vit. Car. p. 88. Dio, in Excerpt. Val. p. 742.
^p 86. Dio, lib. lxxvii. p. 872.

^q Vit. Car.

the empress Lucilla; Helvius Pertinax, son to the emperor of that name, and therefore greatly beloved by the people, and no less hated by the jealous tyrant, whom he had likewise provoked with a satirical jest; for when the title of Parthicus and Sarmaticus were decreed to him by the senate, Pertinax moved, that the surname of Geticus might be added to the other two, alluding not so much to the victory which Caracalla pretended to have gained over the Getæ, as to the murder of his brother Geta^r. Some of Geta's enemies shared the same fate as his friends; but the death of no man occasioned greater surprize in the city than that of Lætus, one of Caracalla's most intimate friends, and the first who had advised him to dispatch his brother. He did not even spare the Vestal virgins, some of whom he ordered to be strangled for having bewailed the death of Geta. In short, no sex, rank, or age, escaped his cruelty.

He loaded the people with taxes in all the provinces of the empire, and at Rome caused great numbers of them to be massacred, sometimes out of revenge, and sometimes only for his diversion; for he delighted in nothing so much as in feats of cruelty and in bloodshed (E). No prince ever employed more iniquitous means of raising money than Caracalla, or squandered it away with more prodigality. He often used to say, that money ought not to be lodged in private hands, but only in the prince's. Pursuant to this maxim he impoverished his subjects in all the provinces of the empire, loading them with excessive imposts and taxes; for which oppression, as well as for his extravagant expences, when his mother took the liberty to chide him, he, like a true tyrant, shewed her his naked sword, saying, "As long as I have this I shall never want (F)." Caracalla

was

^r Vit. Car. p. 87.

(E) The people having one day rallied at the Circensian games, a charioteer whom he favoured, he commanded his guards to rush upon the multitude, and put all the delinquents to the sword; but as the soldiers could not, in so great a croud, distinguish them from the rest, they fell indifferently upon all, sword in hand, and made a dreadful havoc of the disarmed multitude,

sparing only those who had money enough about them to redeem their lives (2).

(F) However, he gave away such immense sums, mostly to persons who least of all deserved them, to wit, to his guards, buffoons, players, gladiators, charioteers, freedmen, &c. that he was obliged to coin false money, which he spent at home, while he employed what true gold and silver he could extort

(2) Herod. lib. iv. p. 546.

from

*Declares
all the sub-
jects of the
empire Ro-
man citi-
zens.*

was author of the famous law declaring all the free subjects of the empire Roman citizens. Though the name and privileges of Roman citizens were by this constitution made common to all the subjects of the empire, yet the ancient distinction of colonies, of Latin, municipal, and free cities, subsisted long after, as appears from the Theodosian code^a and digests^b. But to clear up this difficulty, which has puzzled the best civilians, is not the province of an historian.

*His cruel-
ties in
Gaul.*

Caracalla, finding himself generally hated at Rome, on account of his excessive cruelties, resolved to leave the city, and visit, after the example of Adrian, all the provinces of the empire. Pursuant to this resolution, having in the third year of his reign taken upon him his fourth consulship, and named Decius Coelius Balbinus, afterwards emperor, for his colleague, he set out for Gaul, where he caused the proconsul of the province of Narbonne to be murdered, and made such havock of the people, that he was more hated and abhorred there than he had ever been at Rome. He did not even spare the physicians, who had attended him during a dangerous malady, with which he was seized; but upon his recovery, caused them to be put to death^c. In the beginning of the following year, when Messala and Sabinus were consuls, he returned to Rome, bringing with him a quantity of habits made after the Gaulish fashion,

^a Cod. Th. 2. tom. 21. p. 189, 190. lib. iv. tom. 9. lib. iii p. 370.
^b Digest. 50. tom. 15. lib. i. p. 1921. lib. viii. p. 1923. ^c Vit. Car. p. 87.

from his subjects, in keeping the barbarians quiet, who were constantly threatening him with war (3). He shewed on all occasions the utmost contempt for the senate, entirely neglected the administration of justice, took no care of the provinces, and raised to the highest employments the meanest, and in every respect the most infamous and unworthy persons of the empire. Thus he gave the government of Rome to an eunuch, named Sempronius, by birth an Iberian, by profession a poisoner and magician, who

had been banished by his father Severus, and confined to a desert island. He appointed Theocritus captain of the guards, who had been first a slave, and afterwards a dancing-master and stage-player. Epagathus, another manumitted slave, bore likewise great sway at court, and, with the other two, ruled and controuled both the empire and emperor, setting all things to sale, offices, provinces, public revenues, public justice, and the lives of men both innocent and guilty (4).

(3) Dio in Excerpt. Val. p. 758. & lib. lxxvii. p. 875.
lib. lxxvii. p. 877.

(4) Dio,

which

which he wore himself, and distributed among the people, and would suffer none to attend him but in that dress. His stay at Rome was very short; for this very year the Catti, the Alemanni, whom we find now mentioned for the first time in history, and several other German nations, taking up arms, began to make inroads into the Roman dominions (F). Caracalla therefore marched against them, but in that expedition approved himself a better soldier than commander.

His expedition against the Catti and Alemanni.

For, though he behaved with great courage, and even challenged the bravest of the enemy to single combat; yet, for want of conduct, he was obliged to purchase a peace with large sums, and the liberty of retiring with safety into the Roman dominions *. It was no sooner known in Germany, that he had bought a peace of the Catti and Alemanni, than all the nations inhabiting that extensive country flew to arms, threatening him with a destructive war, unless with them too he shared his treasures; which he did accordingly, paying them yearly pensions, and by these means reducing himself to such difficulties, that he was obliged, as we have hinted already, to coin false money. When he received the deputies of the Barbarians, he suffered no one to be present except the interpreters, whom he caused to be immediately assassinated, lest they should divulge what had passed: however, the Barbarians themselves, when he was murdered, owned, that he had encouraged them to invade Italy, in case any misfortune should befall him, and to march to Rome, which he said, they might take with great ease †. During his stay in Germany, he caused Gaiobamarus king of the Quadi to be treacherously cut off; and, having ordered all the youth of Noricum to take arms, and join him, he commanded his troops, on what provocation we know not, to put them all to the sword ‡. For his pretended victories over the Alemanni, he took the title of Germanicus and Alemannicus §.

Yr. of Fl.
2561.

A. D. 213.
U. C. 961.

Buys a peace.

In the fifth year of his reign, when Lætus was consul the second time with Cerealis, Caracalla, leaving Germany, led his army into Dacia; where he gained some small advantages over the Getæ, and then pursued his march through

* Dio, lib. lxxvii. p. 876.

† Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 891.

‡ Idem in Excerpt. Val. p. 749, & 754.

§ Car. Vit. p. 89.

Goltz. p. 92. Birag. p. 293.

(F) The Alemanni inhabited parts from their name, a mixed multitude of all the neighbouring nations (1).

(1) Vorburg. Hist. Rom. Ger. p. 473. & Buch. Belg. lib. vi. cap. 7.

Thrace

Yr. of Fl.
2563.
A. D. 215.
U. C. 963.

*He passes
over into
Asia.*

Thrace to the Hellepont, which he crossed, not without danger of being shipwrecked. Arriving in Asia, he hastened to Pergamus, hoping to be delivered by the god Esculapius, worshipped in that city, from all the maladies, both of his body and mind: but the god was deaf to his prayers; so that he left Pergamus, after having enriched it with many privileges, as if he designed to bribe the deity; and pursued his journey to Ilium, where he viewed the remains of ancient Troy, and visited the tomb of Achilles, paying extraordinary honours to the memory of that hero, though an implacable enemy to the Trojans, from whom the Romans pretended to derive their origin. From Ilium he travelled to Nicomedia, where he spent the winter. In that city he invited Dio Cassius to sup with him, during the feast of Saturn; for he obliged most of the senators to attend him in all his journies, to defray his travelling charges, and to build in the cities, where he passed the winter, theatres, circuses, and amphitheatres, for public sports.

*Arrives at
Antioch.*

In the following year, when C. Atius Sabinus was consul the second time, with Cornelius Anullinus, Caracalla, leaving Nicomedia after the fourth of April, crossed Bithynia, Asia, and the other provinces, on his journey to Antioch, in which city he was received with extraordinary pomp. During his residence, he wrote to the senate, that he was well apprised they did not approve of his conduct; but so long as he had an army at his command, he neither valued their reproaches, nor dreaded their hatred^a. He was very desirous of quarrelling with the Parthians, who were involved in a civil war, occasioned by the ambition of the two sons of the late king Vologeses; but they complying with all his demands, he deferred his intended expedition against them, and turned his thoughts on the reduction of Osrhoene and Armenia, though the kings of these two countries lived in perfect amity with the Romans. However, Caracalla, having invited them to Antioch, as friends and allies of the Roman people, caused them to be arrested, and imprisoned, without the least colour or pretence for such treachery. Osrhoene immediately submitted, and was, according to some writers, reduced to a Roman province; though others maintain, that it was long after governed by its own princes^b. All we know is, that Caracalla established a Roman colony at Edeffa, the capital of Osrhoene; and that, in the fourth century, the whole country was subject to the Romans.

*He treacherously
seizes and
imprisons
the kings
of Osrhoene
and Armenia.*

^a Dio, lib. lxxvii. p. 879: Herodian. lib. iv. p. 519.
^b Vide Spanh. lib. ii. p. 86, & Syncel. p. 359.

The Armenians, notwithstanding the captivity of their king, made a vigorous resistance ; gave a total defeat to Theocritus the comedian, who was sent against them at the head of a numerous army ; baffled all the efforts of Caracalla ; and maintained themselves in possession of their ancient liberties.

From Antioch the emperor proceeded to Alexandria, where he made a dreadful havock of the inhabitants, being highly provoked against them for the many lampoons, which, agreeable to their satirical humour, they had published on the death of Geta. He gave private orders to his numerous troops, who were dispersed all over the city, to fall upon the inhabitants in the night-time, to enter and pillage their houses, and put all to the sword, without distinction of sex, age, or condition. His execrable orders were executed with such barbarity, as can hardly be expressed ; the whole city floated in blood ; every house was filled with dead bodies ; and the return of day discovered in every street the sad monuments of this inhuman execution : but the tyrant, not yet satiated with blood, commanded the slaughter to be continued all the following day, that he might have the diabolical pleasure of beholding it from the temple of Serapis, where he had passed the preceding night, imploring, during the general massacre, the protection of that deity. When the soldiers were tired with slaughter, Caracalla wrote to the senate, acquainting them, that he had revenged the affronts offered him by the Alexandrians ; but that it was not necessary to specify the number of the dead, nor their condition, since none had perished but such as were guilty. Before he left the city he stripped it of all its privileges ; suppressed the celebrated assembly of learned men ; ordered all strangers, who lived there, to abandon the place ; and that such as had escaped the general massacre, who were very few, might not have the satisfaction of seeing one another, he cut off all communication of one street with another, by walls built for that purpose, and guarded by the troops he left in garrison^c. However, as the tyrant perished soon after, Alexandria speedily recovered its former splendor, and continued to be the first city of the empire after Rome.

*Orders a
general
massacre
at Alex-
andria.*

From Alexandria the emperor returned to Antioch, with a design to make war upon the Parthians, and, by some memorable exploit, deserve the surname of Parthicus, which he seems to have preferred to all others. In order to have some pretence for declaring war, he sent an embassy to Artabanus

*His trea-
chery to-
wards the
Parthians.*

^c Herodian. lib. iv. p. 549. Dio, lib. lxxvii. p. 879, 880. Vit. Car. p. 87.

banes with rich presents, to desire his daughter in marriage, not doubting but the Parthian would deny him his request; nor was he mistaken in his conjecture, Artabanus alleging, that his daughter, brought up after the Parthian manner, could never be reconciled to the customs of the Romans. Caracalla persisting in his demand, Artabanus at length complied with it; suffered him to enter his dominions; dispatched orders to his governors to receive and entertain him with the utmost magnificence; and went out in person to meet him, as he approached the royal city of Ctesiphon, where the nuptials were to be solemnized. Artabanus was attended by the chief nobility of the kingdom, and a numerous body of guards, unarmed, and in their gayest attire. But Caracalla, abusing the confidence they reposed in him, with a treachery hardly to be equalled, gave the signal to his soldiers to fall upon them sword in hand: they obeyed the signal, and made a terrible slaughter of the defenceless multitude. However, the king had the good fortune to escape unhurt. After this infamous exploit, worthy of such an emperor as Caracalla, the cruel and perfidious monster, enraged that Artabanus had escaped, wreaked his fury on all the countries through which he passed on his return to Syria, leaving every where dismal monuments of his barbarous cruelty, and insatiable avarice ^d (G). The emperor returned from this memorable expedition to Edeffa; whence he wrote boasting letters to the senate, pretending that he had subdued the Parthians, and reduced all the East. The senate, though informed of what had passed, yet decreed him a triumph, and the title of Parthicus ^e.

*Honoured
by the se-
nate with
the title of
Parthicus.*

In the following year, when C. Bruttius Præfens and T. Messius Extricatus were consuls, a bloody fate at length overtook this man of blood. He had often treated as a

^d Herod. lib. iv. p. 551—553.

^e Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 381.

(G) Thus says Herodian: but Dio Cassius writes, that Caracalla, upon the Parthian king's refusing him his daughter, entered his dominions, without any farther declaration of war; ravaged great part of Media; destroyed several cities; took Arbela; and there demolished the tombs of the Parthian monarchs, insulting their remains in a most sacrilegious manner.

The same writer adds, that as the irruption was sudden and unexpected, he did not meet with the least opposition, or even saw the face of an enemy (2). Spartan, indeed, speaks of a tumultuary engagement between the Parthians and Romans, in which Caracalla let loose wild beasts against the enemy (3).

(2) Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 381.

(3) Vit. Car. p. 37,
coward,

Edward, and threatened with death Macrinus, captain of the guards; besides, about this time a soothsayer declared publicly in Africa, that Macrinus, and his son Diadumenus, were destined to the empire. In consequence of this declaration, the soothsayer was immediately sent to Rome, where he repeated and maintained the same prediction before Maternianus, captain of the city-guards, whom the emperor, as he reposed an entire confidence in him, had enjoined to employ all possible means, even the detestable mysteries of magic, in order to discover whether any person privately aspired at the empire. Maternianus, therefore, wrote immediately to the emperor what he had learned of the soothsayer; but the letter being delivered to Julia, whom Caracalla had left at Antioch, with full power to open and read all his dispatches (for he himself was still at Edeffa, where he had passed the winter), Macrinus, who attended the emperor, was acquainted with the contents, before Julia could transmit them from Antioch to Edeffa. This intelligence was conveyed to him by Ulpianus, his intimate friend, who delivered the letter to a courier dispatched from Rome to the court at Edeffa^f. Macrinus, thus informed before the emperor of what Maternianus had written, was sensible that he could not use too much dispatch^g; he immediately gained, with great promises, two brothers, Aurelius Nemesianus and Aurelius Apollinaris, both tribunes of the guards; Julius Martialis, an exempt, whom the emperor had provoked, by refusing him the post of a centurion; Martius Agrippa, the admiral; Rhætianus, tribune of the second legion; and several others; who put their design in execution on the eighth of April of this year 217, while the emperor was going on horseback, with a small retinue, from Edeffa to visit a temple of the Moon at Carrhæ. Being obliged to stop by the way on a pressing occasion, and all his attendants withdrawing, except one of the prince's domestics, as he was ready to mount again, Martialis, unwilling to lose that opportunity, ran hastily to him, gave him such a stab in the throat with his dagger, that he expired immediately, and mixed with the crowd, before they were apprised of the transaction; but when the emperor's death was publicly known, a Scythian, who belonged to the guards, observing Martialis with a bloody dagger in his hand, which in the confusion he had not the precaution to conceal, and thence concluding him to be the author of the murder, shot him through with an arrow. Caracalla was killed after he had lived twenty-nine years

A prediction in favour of Macrinus;

who conspires against Caracalla.

*Yr. of Fl.
2565.
A. D. 217.
U. C. 965.*

Caracalla murdered.

^f Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 382.

^g Herod. lib. iv. p. 554.

and four months, and reigned six years, two months, and four days, from the death of his father ^b (H).

*Opellius
Macrinus
declared
emperor
by the sol-
diery.*

The soldiery immediately conveyed the body of the deceased prince to Edeffa, and proceeded, even before they had performed the funeral obsequies, to the election of a new emperor. They were in debate that and the two following days; but, on the fourth, the eleventh of April, and the birth-day of Severus, the prætorian guards at Edeffa, instigated by the tribunes, who had been privy to the conspiracy of Macrinus, declared him emperor; for none but his accomplices imagined him to have been accessary to the death of Caracalla, which they ascribed to Martialis alone, impelled to the murder through private passion and revenge. Macrinus pretended at first to decline such a heavy burden; but was easily prevailed upon to take it on his shoulders. He distributed, on that occasion, large sums amongst the soldiery; made them ample promises; and granted a general pardon to all persons accused of, or condemned for, crimes of majesty or high-treason (I).

The

^b Dio, p. 891. Herod. p. 556.

(H) The authors who lived under Caracalla, were Q. Severus Sammonicus, who wrote a great number of books, which were much admired by Geta; and hence Sammonicus was, by Caracalla's order, murdered, while he was at supper (1). None of his works have reached our times, except some books in Latin verse on physics, and a few passages quoted by Macrobius out of a book in prose, which he inscribed to the emperor Severus (2). Ælius Maurus, whom Spartian quotes in relating the death of Severus (3), wrote in the reign of Caracalla, being then very old; for he had been a slave to Phlegon, the freedman of the emperor Adrian (4). Oppian, the

celebrated Greek poet, lived under Antoninus, the son of Domna; that is, under Caracalla, the son of Julia Domna, as he himself informs us (5), and not under Antoninus the Philosopher, as we read in the chronicle of Eusebius and St. Jerom (6).

(I) Herodian writes, that the army first chose Adventus, Macrinus's colleague in the command of the prætorian guards, who excused himself on account of his great age (7). But, according to Dio Cassius, Adventus only boasted, that, in regard to seniority, he had a better right to the empire than Macrinus, declaring, at the same time, that he willingly yielded it to him (8). Adven-

(1) Car. Vit. p. 86, & Get. Vit. p. 92.
p. 52, & Macrobi. Saturn. lib. ii. cap. 12.

(4) Voss. Hist. Lat. ibid.

(6) Euseb. Chron. p. 121, 122.

(8) Dio, p. 894.

(2) Voss. Poet. Lat.

(3) Vit. Sev. p. 71.

(5) Oppian. de Venat. lib. i. p. 129.

(7) Herod. lib. iv. p. 555.

The new emperor Opilius, or rather Opelius Macrinus, *His birth and preferences.* was a native of Cæsarea in Mauritania, now Algier, and of a very mean descent. We are told, that many things concerning his birth, his education, and first employments, were invented by his successor Heliogabalus, and, by his orders, inserted in his life. Hence, without regarding what we read in Julius Capitolinus, who was strangely prejudiced against him, we shall chiefly follow Dio Cassius, who flourished under him, and seems quite free from all personal hatred and affection. According to that writer, he was a person of a mild and humane temper, which gained him the affections both of the people and soldiery, and covered the meanness of his birth, and first employments. He was pretty well versed in the laws; a circumstance which induced Plautianus to commit to him the care of his estate, and appoint him his steward. Afterwards Severus charged him with the care of the posts in Italy; but soon after banished him, for what transgression we know not, into Africa, where he supported himself by pleading causes of small consequence. He returned to Rome after the death of Severus, when Caracalla gave him an employment in the treasury, in which he acquitted himself so uprightly, that the same prince named him to succeed the celebrated Papi-nian in the command of the prætorian guards. His chief province in that office was to decide causes with the emperor, or in his name; a task which he performed with great equity, when Caracalla himself was not present¹. He married Nonia Celsa, a woman of a very indifferent character, and had by her a son, commonly called by the Latin historians Diadumenus; but by Dio Cassius, Herodian, and in most inscriptions, Diadumenianus². With the empire he took the names of Severus and Aurelius, which are still to be seen on several of his medals: but on none appears that of Antoninus; whence we conclude Capitolinus to have been mistaken in giving him that appellation. Before he left Edessa, he caused the body of Caracalla to be burnt with the usual solemnity, and sent his ashes, inclosed in an urn,

¹ Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 892, 893.

² Herod. p. 566. Goltz. p. 190.

tus was an excellent commander, but altogether unqualified for a statesman; exceeding old, no less meanly born than Macrinus, and so illiterate, that he could not even

read (9). However, Macrinus created him senator, appointed him governor of Rome, and the following year chose him for his colleague in the consulship.

(9) Dio, p. 894.

*The death
of Julia.*

to his mother Julia, at Antioch, who, resolving not to outlive him, especially after Macrinus had ordered her to leave that city, on account of her bitter invectives against him, and her private intrigues, in order to seize the empire, effected her own death by abstaining from all food. Her body was sent to Rome, and deposited in the tomb of Caius and Lucius Cæsars, the grandsons of Augustus, and conveyed afterwards by her sister Mæsa to the mausoleum of Adrian¹.

*Diadumenus declared
Cæsar.*

Macrinus was no sooner declared emperor, than he sent for his son Diadumenus, who was at Antioch. The soldiers who attended him, and were entirely attached to Macrinus, gave him, of their own motion, pursuant to their private instructions, the title of Cæsar; which, upon his arrival at Edeffa, was confirmed by the whole army, his father giving, on that occasion, another bounty to the soldiery. The new prince acquainted the senate immediately with the death of Caracalla, and his accession to the empire, by a letter, in which he spoke with great reserve of the deceased emperor, neither commending nor censuring him: he only said, that since the destiny which he seemed to have deserved had at length overtaken him, and the army had raised him to the supreme command, he would acknowledge himself indebted to the senate alone for the empire, if they thought fit to confirm that choice. Though the senate had heard before news of the death of Caracalla, yet, apprehending it to be only a false report, they had carefully concealed their sentiments; but, being now assured of the

*The hatred
of the senate to
Caracalla.*

truth by Macrinus's letters, they loaded him with dreadful curses; ordered all his gold and silver statues to be melted down, his name to be erased from all inscriptions; annulled his acts; and declared his memory infamous, styling him no longer Antoninus, but Bassianus, Caracalla, and Taranus, which was the name of a little, deformed, and cruel gladiator². They were so transported with joy in finding themselves delivered from the tyranny of Caracalla, that, overlooking the meanness of Macrinus's birth, they declared him emperor without the least hesitation, heaping upon him all the honours which they had ever conferred upon any prince. His family was ranked among the patrician families, his son proclaimed Cæsar, and his wife, Nonia Celsa, honoured with the title of Augusta. In their answer to his letter, they earnestly intreated him to punish, according to their deserts, the ministers of the late tyrant, and to extirpate the whole tribe of informers. Macrinus complied, in some degree, with their request; for he suffered them to

*Macrinus
acknowledged em-
peror by the
senate.*

¹ Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 899.

² Idem, p. 89a.

condemn,

condemn, not to death, but to banishment, three senators, and many others of an inferior rank; and ordered all the slaves and freedmen, who had informed against their masters or patrons, to be crucified.

The emperor in the mean time, leaving Edeffa, led his army to Antioch; and there, in the presence of all his troops, gave his son the name of Antoninus; a name highly revered, and, in a manner, adored by the soldiery^a. On this occasion the whole army loudly demanded the deification of Caracalla; a demand which greatly surprised Macrinus, who, nevertheless, was forced to comply with it, and order the senate to rank among the gods one whom he himself had caused to be murdered, and who was deservedly detested by all, except the soldiery, as a professed foe to the human race, a monster gorged with blood, a parricide, and the most inhuman tyrant that ever disgraced a diadem. The senate, pursuant to the emperor's mandate, immediately decreed him divine honours, a temple, altars, priests, sacrifices, and all the apparatus of divinity. The emperor was even obliged to cause Aurelianus to be condemned and executed, for having privately removed some of the deceased emperor's statues^o; so oppressive was the authority which the army had, by degrees, usurped both over the senate and prince.

*Caracalla
deified.*

During these transactions at Antioch and Rome, Artabanes, king of the Parthians, having assembled a powerful army, advanced with a design to invade the Roman territories, and retaliate the injuries he had received. Macrinus, induced partly by his natural timidity (for he was not a man of courage), and partly by motives of justice and equity, endeavoured to appease him, by releasing all the prisoners taken by Caracalla, and sending ambassadors to propose a peace, on terms equally honourable to both nations; but Artabanes declaring that he would listen to no proposals, unless the Romans engaged, as a preliminary, to rebuild all the cities they had destroyed, to give up Mesopotamia, and to pay an immense sum, to be employed in repairing the tombs of the Parthian monarchs defaced by Caracalla, and making good the losses his subjects had sustained by the late unjust invasion, Macrinus, ashamed to comply with such high demands, took the field, and met the enemy in the neighbourhood of Nisibis. But the Romans, enervated under Caracalla by an idle and effeminate life, were overcome in two engagements; insomuch that Macrinus, not daring to venture a third, sent rich presents

*The Par-
thian war.*

*The Ro-
mans de-
feated.*

^a Dio, p. 896. Herod. lib. iv. p. 561.

^o Vit. Macr. p. 95, 96.

*Macrinus
concludes a
peace with
the Par-
thians*

*and Ar-
menians.*

*Restores
Tiridates to
the throne
of Armenia.*

*Macrinus's
severity a-
gainst cri-
minals.*

*An instance
of his cle-
mency.*

for Artabanes, and all the grandes of his court; and by these means obtained a peace, which cost him, according to our historian, fifty millions of drachmas. However, the senate decreed him the surname of Parthicus, which he accepted, as appears from some of his medals^p; but declined the triumph, which was decreed him at the same time^q.

Macrinus appeased the Armenians, whom Caracalla had likewise provoked, by restoring their king Tiridates to the throne, together with those lands which they had formerly possessed in Cappadocia. Capitolinus speaks of a war with the people of Arabia, in which Macrinus signalized his courage, and was attended with great success^r; but of this rupture no mention is made by any other historian. Macrinus, having concluded a peace both with the Parthians and Armenians, returned to Antioch; and, by means of many excellent laws, endeavoured to reform the abuses which had prevailed in the reign of his predecessor. He declared all the rescripts and decisions of the emperors null and void, unless they were found agreeable to the ancient and known laws of Rome, saying, it was shameful that the caprices of a Commodus, or a Caracalla, should have the force of laws. He punished crimes with great severity. When any persons, whatever their rank, were convicted of adultery, he caused the delinquents to be tied together; and, thus bound, to be burnt alive. He obliged fugitive slaves to fight like gladiators: sometimes he ordered criminals to be shut up, and starved to death. He deprived of life such informers as could not make good their accusations; when they did, they had the usual reward, that is, the fourth part of the criminal's estate; whence they were called quadruplatores; but at the same time Macrinus declared them infamous. He divested the inhabitants of Pergamus of all the privileges lately granted them by Caracalla, and appointed Dio Cassius the historian governor of that city, and of Smyrna^s. A conspiracy being discovered against him, he punished some of the authors of the plot; but pardoned Arbianus, Thuscus, and Gellius, of whom the former is styled duke of Armenia, and the two latter lieutenants of Asia and Arabia; he even continued them in their employments, hoping to gain their attachment by clemency. We are told by Capitolinus, that Diadumenus wrote on this occasion to his father, and likewise to the empress his mother, complaining of the indulgence which the emperor had shewn, and begging that they might be executed without

^p Noris. de Dio. p. 19.
Macr. p. 95.

^q Dio, lib. lxxviii. p. 900.
^r Dio, p. 897.

^r Vit.

mercy^t. But we cannot persuade ourselves, that Diadumenus, then only nine or ten years old, was capable of writing such letters.

We have hitherto seen nothing in Macrinus to condemn : however, he was not without his faults ; for he deprived those who were nobly born of their employments, and afterwards raised to the highest posts persons of his own condition, though in general void of all merit. Thus he appointed Adventus, of whom we have spoken before, governor of Rome, and prince of the senate, even before he was a senator, though altogether unequal to that high office. He recalled from the government of Pannonia and Dacia, Sabinus and Castinus, men of merit and distinction. He sent Marcius Agrippa, a manumitted slave, formerly banished by Severus for treasonable practices, to succeed the former ; and substituted Decius Triccianus, a man of no rank, in the room of the latter. He punished the least transgression or neglect of duty in the soldiers, with such severity, that instead of Macrinus, he was called by them Macellinus, from the word macellum, signifying *shambles*. In the reign of Caracalla, they had been quartered in the cities, where they indulged themselves with impunity in all manner of licentiousness ; but Macrinus obliged them to live under tents in the fields, and would not suffer them to approach or enter any city, in order to inure them to a regular and military life. This hardship they could not endure, especially as the emperor himself indulged in pleasures at Antioch, while they in the field often wanted necessities. They therefore began to regret the loss of Caracalla, to hate the very name of Macrinus, and publicly to reproach him with the meanness of his birth, and former life. At the same time they were acquainted, that he had been the chief author of the murder of Caracalla ; an information which incensed them against him to such a degree, that they only wanted a favourable opportunity to revolt from Macrinus, and appoint another emperor in his room ; a step which they took accordingly in the following year, when Macrinus and Aventus were consuls.

This revolution was effected by the contrivance and artifices of Mæsa, sister to the late empress Julia, a woman of great cunning, dexterity, experience, and courage. She had lived at court with her sister during the reigns of Severus and Caracalla, and had acquired great knowledge of affairs, as well as immense wealth ; which Macrinus suffered her to enjoy after the murder of Caracalla, but ordered her to

Raises only persons of mean descent, and no merit.

He disoblige the soldiers by his excessive severity.

A conspiracy formed against him.

^t Diad. Vit. p. 100.

quit the court, and retire to Emesa in Phœnicia, her native city. She had two daughters; namely, Julia Soemis, or Soemias, and Julia Mamæa. Each of these had a son. Julia Soemis was the mother of Varius Avitus Bassianus; and Alexianus was the son of Julia Mamæa. When Mæsa retired to Emesa, she took her two grandsons with her, Avitus being then thirteen years, and Alexianus only nine; and caused them both to be consecrated to the Sun, the chief deity of the inhabitants of Emesa, who had erected a stately temple to him, under the name of Eleagabalus. Bassianus, the eldest of the two, was appointed pontiff of that deity, and thence called Eleagabalus^u; for his name has occasioned great disputes among the learned. As the temple of the Sun was at a small distance from Macrinus's camp, the Roman soldiers going frequently to visit the deity of the place, were very much charmed with the comeliness of the young pontiff, who was tall and genteel, well-shaped, and had something in his air and looks extremely gracious and pleasing. Mæsa, observing her grandson thus admired by the soldiery, resolved to improve the opportunity, pretending, that Heliogabalus was the son of Caracalla; that she possessed immense treasures, and would willingly enrich such as should espouse the cause of the deceased emperor's son. The soldiers, who were encamped in the neighbourhood of Emesa, believing Heliogabalus to be the real son of Caracalla, and allured by the great promises of Mæsa, invited her with her grandson to their camp; and, upon their arrival, proclaimed Heliogabalus emperor, by the name of M. Aurelius Antoninus, and invested him with all the ensigns of sovereignty^w.

Heliogabalus is by some proclaimed emperor.

Macrinus, who was then at Antioch, instead of marching in person to quash the revolt at once, as he might have easily done, contented himself with sending Ulpius Julianus, one of the captains of the guards, with some troops, against the mutineers. Julianus attacked their camp with great resolution, and might have made himself master of it the very first day, the soldiers under his command being mostly Moors, and consequently greatly attached to Macrinus their countryman; but Julianus checking their ardour, and putting off the assault to the next day, in hopes the revolvers would in the mean time submit, they raised new works during the night; sustained the assault next morning with great resolution; and, by shewing Heliogabalus on

^u Herod. lib. v. p. 562. Dio, in Excerpt. Val. p. 111. Macr. Vit. p. 96.

^w Dio, p. 902.

the ramparts, and with him the treasures they had received from Mæsa, induced the Romans under Julianus, and highly incensed against Macrinus, to murder their own officers, and join them. Julianus immediately fled, and lay for some time concealed; but being at length discovered, one of the soldiers struck off his head, and carried it to the emperor, wrapped up in a linen cloth, and sealed with Julianus's own seal, pretending it to be that of Heliogabalus; and made his escape while the emperor was unfolding it. Macrinus concluding that he had been betrayed and defeated, hastened to the camp of the Albanians, that is, of the soldiers who had their fixed quarters at Alba, and were then encamped in the neighbourhood of Apamea; acquainted them in a very injudicious speech with the revolt of the troops near Emesa; declared Heliogabalus, his cousin Alexianus, both their mothers, and their grandmother Mæsa, public enemies; and proclaimed his son, Diadumenus, Augustus, and his partner in the empire, promising, on that occasion, to each soldier five thousand drachmas, and paying them of that sum one thousand on the spot. At the same time he informed the senate of the revolt of the troops, and the promotion of his son, and enjoined them to promise to the people, in his name, one hundred and fifty drachmas a man. The senate, by whom Macrinus was greatly revered, confirmed the title of Augustus to his son, and declared Heliogabalus a public enemy.

*Macrinus
proclaims
his son Dia-
dumenus
emperor.*

From Apamea the emperor returned to Antioch, instead of marching without delay, against the rebels at Emesa; which city was but at a small distance. He was scarce gone, when the Albanians, and the other troops encamped in that neighbourhood, declared for Heliogabalus, who advanced to Antioch, to attack Macrinus, before he had time to assemble his other forces. The emperor, upon the news of his approach, marched out of the city at the head of the prætorian bands; and the two armies meeting on the confines of Syria and Phœnicia, a bloody engagement ensued, in which the troops of Heliogabalus, after a long and vigorous resistance, began to give ground; but were brought back to the charge by Mæsa, Soemis, the mother of Heliogabalus, and by Heliogabalus himself, who signalized his valour on that occasion in a very eminent manner. The fight being thus renewed, Macrinus, being naturally timorous, fled, when he saw the troops of Heliogabalus return to the charge. The prætorian guards kept their ground, even after his flight, till Heliogabalus assured them upon his oath, that they should not be discharged, but should enjoy under him all the privileges and exemptions which

*Most of
the troops
revolt.*

had

had been granted them by other emperors: then they declared for him, as the other troops had already done¹. Macrinus retired to Antioch, and there publishing that he had gained a complete victory, ordered his son to shelter himself in the country of the Parthians; and before the news of his defeat were publicly known, fled himself in disguise, taking with him letters for those who had care of the posts, pretending that he had been sent by the emperor upon some important affair that required dispatch. Thus he crossed undiscovered the provinces of Cilicia, Cappadocia, Galatia, and Bithynia. To avoid Nicomedia, he embarked at a port in the neighbourhood of that city, called Eribolus, with a design to go by sea to Chalcedon, and from thence to cross over to Byzantium; but being driven back by contrary winds to Chalcedon, when he was upon the point of landing at Byzantium, he was unfortunately taken ill, and discovered by those whom Heliogabalus had sent to pursue him.

Yr. of Fl.
2566.
A. D. 218.
U. C. 966.

*Both he
and his son
Diadumenus put
to death.*

The soldiers, to whose custody he was committed, put him into a chariot, in order to carry him to Heliogabalus; but he having thrown himself out of the carriage, when he was informed that his son too had been taken, and by the fall broken his shoulder-bone, the soldiers put an end to his pain and life, by cutting off his head; which they carried to Heliogabalus, who ordered it to be exposed on the point of a spear². Such was the end of Macrinus, in the fifty-fourth year of his age, after he had reigned near four months. His son Diadumenus was afterwards publicly executed by the new emperor's order, as a common malefactor, and his head carried about, with that of his father, on the point of a spear. Basilianus, governor of Egypt, and Marius Secundus, governor of Phœnicia, refused to acknowledge Heliogabalus, even after the death of Macrinus; which refusal occasioned several seditions in those countries, in one of which great numbers of the people and soldiery were killed, and among the rest Secundus himself. Basilianus fled to Italy, and remained some time concealed in the neighbourhood of Brundisium; but was at length betrayed by one of his old friends, to whom he had written for relief, and by Heliogabalus's order executed at Nicomedia, where that prince passed the first winter after his accession to the empire³.

Heliogabalus, immediately after the defeat and flight of Macrinus, entered Antioch, and from thence wrote to the

¹ Dio, p. 889. Herod. lib. iv. p. 565.
² Dio, p. 905. Heliog. Vit. p. 102.

³ Macr. Vit. p. 96

senate, acquainting them with the defeat of Macrinus, and his accession to the empire, promising to conform to the excellent institutions of Augustus and M. Aurelius, and to do nothing without their advice and approbation. However, as he styled himself Augustus, the son of Antoninus, that is, of Caracalla, and the grandson of Severus, and likewise assumed the proconsular and tribunitial power, and the titles of Happy and Pious, before they had been conferred upon him by the senate, his letter occasioned a general consternation in the city: nevertheless they confirmed all the titles he had assumed; declared Macrinus a public enemy, and honoured both Mæsa and Soëmis with the title of Augustæ. Thus was Varius Avitus Bassianus, commonly known in history by the name of Heliogabalus, raised to the empire. He was the most profligate, impious, inhuman, effeminate, and prodigal tyrant that ever disgraced a diadem. His grandmother Mæsa, a woman of great parts and experience, ashamed of his scandalous and unaccountable conduct, endeavoured to the utmost of her power to keep him within some bounds; but he, utterly despising her, only attended to the wicked counsels of his mother Soëmis, and of such as flattered him in his crimes. Hence he may be truly said to have exceeded Nero himself in cruelty, Caligula in prodigality, and the most abandoned princes, who reigned either before or after him, in all manner of lewdness and debauchery. He did not reign full four years, and in that short time married six wives (K).

Heliogabalus acknowledged emperor by the senate.

His character.

But his frequent marriages and divorces did not give so much offence, as his scandalous lewdness and debaucheries. He turned the imperial palace into a brothel, filling it with

His monstrous lewdness.

(K) His first wife was Julia Cornelia Paula, a lady of an irreproachable character, and sprung from two of the most illustrious families in Rome; but he soon after divorced her, and stripped her of the title of Augusta, and all the other honours he had conferred upon her. He then married Julia Aquilia Severa, a Vestal virgin, which was accounted by the Romans an enormous crime; but soon divorced her to marry daughter of the emperor M. Aurelius, though already wedded to Pomponius Bassus, whom he caused to be murdered. Faustina, and three others, whose names are unknown, were in a short time obliged to give room to Aquilia Severa the Vestal, whom he admitted again to his bed, saying, that he hoped, as she was a priestess, and he a priest, to have by her an offspring worthy of the immortal gods (1).

(1) Dio, lib. lxxix. p. 911. Herod. p. 568.

such numbers of prostitutes, for the conveniency, he said, of his friends and favourites, that it seemed a city, says Herodian, inhabited only by lewd women. With them, and his infamous companions, he passed the greatest part of his time, abandoning himself to the most scandalous and unnatural practices. He often assembled them in one of the halls of the palace; appeared among them in the apparel, and with the air, of a prostitute; encouraged them in formal harangues to reject all modesty, shake off all restraints, and make it their whole study to devise new methods of satisfying their lustful appetites. In his speeches he addressed them with the title of commilitones, *fellow-soldiers*; and indeed they were the only soldiers worthy of such a general. After some time he drove many of the debauched women out of the palace, and took catamites in their room; for he was himself of that infamous tribe, having been publicly married first to Aurelius Zoticus, one of his officers, and afterwards to Hierocles, a slave. He was not ashamed to satisfy his most infamous and unnatural lusts in public, in the face of the sun, and the whole Roman people, putting thereby out of countenance even the most profligate amongst his debauched companions. But to dwell on such abominable scenes of impurity is beneath the dignity of an historian, and only worthy of such a biographer as Ælius Lampridius, who seems to take particular delight in describing the detestable pollutions and abominations of this lewd monster.

His prodigality.

His prodigality was as boundless as his lust; for, in the short period of his reign, he is said to have reduced almost to beggary all the subjects of the empire, and to have left at his death the treasury entirely exhausted. He suffered nothing to appear at his table, but what was brought from the most distant countries at an immense charge. His palace, his chambers, and his beds, were all furnished with cloth of gold. When he went abroad, all the way between his chamber, and the place where his chariot waited for him, was strewed with gold-dust; for he thought it beneath him to tread upon the ground like other men. All his tables, chests, chairs, and such vessels as were destined for the meanest uses, were of pure gold. Though his cloaths were exceeding costly, and ornamented with jewels and precious stones, yet he is said never to have worn one suit twice, nor ever to have put on again a ring which he had once used. He was constantly served in gold-plate; but every night, after supper, presented to his guests and attendants what had been used that day. He often distributed among the people and soldiery, not only corn and money,

money, as other emperors had done, but gold and silver-plate, precious stones, and tickets, intitling them to immense sums, which were immediately paid. He caused his fish-ponds to be filled with water distilled from roses, and the naumachia, where sea-fights were exhibited, with wine. His rooms, tables, couches, and galleries, where he walked, were daily strewed with roses, lilies, and all sorts of flowers. His banquets and entertainments were expensive almost beyond belief, his favourite dishes being tongues of peacocks and nightingales, and the brains of parrots and pheasants. He fed his dogs with the livers of geese, his horses with raisins, and his lions and other wild beasts with partridges and pheasants. In short, the whole wealth of the Roman empire was scarce sufficient, says Herodian, to supply the extravagance of one man *. As for his unaccountable follies, we refer our readers to Lampridius, who relates them at length with all their circumstances.

Heliogabalus, before he left Syria, commanded several persons, both in the East, and at Rome, to be put to death ^b. From Syria the new emperor marched to Nicomedia in Bithynia, where he passed the winter, and exhibited many fresh instances of his cruel and inhuman temper, causing, besides many others, one Gannys to be murdered, for advising him in a friendly manner to abandon his former vices, and behave like a Roman emperor. Gannys was one of Mæsa's domestics, but so highly favoured by Heliogabalus, on account of his fidelity, and the zeal he had shewn in his cause, that he designed to marry his mother to him, and declare him Cæsar. However, his presuming to find fault with his vices provoked the emperor to such a degree, that he ordered Gannys to be executed upon the spot, and gave him with his own hand the first blow ^c.

Causes several persons of distinction to be murdered.

In the beginning of the following year, Heliogabalus entered upon his first consulship, having for his colleague one Sacerdos, of whom we find no farther mention in history. Early in the spring the emperor set out for Rome, where he was received both by the people and senate with great demonstrations of joy, though no one doubted but he would prove a second Nero or Caligula. Next day he went to the senate, and taking with him his grandmother placed her next to the consuls, ordered her name to be enrolled among those of the other senators, and appointed that she should vote as the rest, and be consulted in all matters of importance. For his mother Soemis he instituted a senate,

He ranks his grandmother among the senators, and institutes a senate of women.

* Herod. p. 569. Vit. Heliog. p. 102.
p. 894. ^c Dio in Excerpt. Val. p. 761, 762.

^b Dio, lib. lxxix.

consisting

Yr. of Fl.
2567.
A. D. 219.
U. C. 967.

*Establishes
the wor-
ship of the
god Elea-
gabalus.*

consisting only of women, and declared her their head or president. Their consultations, debates, and decrees, turned upon the dress and apparel of the Roman matrons, their ranks and dignities, their visits, ceremonies, and other important matters of the like nature^d. The emperor himself was not employed in affairs of greater moment, being wholly taken up in establishing the worship of his favourite deity. He erected a magnificent temple, worshipped him with ceremonies never before practised at Rome, preferred him even to Jupiter, and to all the other gods of the Romans, who, he said, were but the servants of his god; and declared, that he would suffer no other divinity to be adored at Rome, or elsewhere, but Eleagabalus. With this view he profaned all other temples, stripped them of their ornaments, and attempted to convey into the temple of his own god the perpetual fire of Vesta, the statue of Cybele, the bucklers of Mars, the palladium brought from Troy, as was supposed, by Æneas, and whatever else was regarded by the Romans as most sacred. From Carthage he ordered the goddess Cœlestis to be brought to Rome, and with her all the rich ornaments belonging to her temple, married her to Eleagabalus, and caused the nuptials of the two deities to be celebrated with great pomp and solemnity^e (L).

In the following year Heliogabalus entered upon his second consulship, having for his colleague Eutychianus, an imperial freedman, and a celebrated buffoon, whence he was surnamed Comazon, which, in the Greek tongue sig-

^d Heliog. Vit. p. 102, 105, 106.
Dio, lib. lxxix. p. 912.

^e Herod. lib. v. p. 568.

(L) Dio Cassius tells us, that in honour of his god, he abstained from hogs-flesh, and caused himself to be circumcised (1); and Herodian says, he erected another magnificent temple for him in the country, whither he conveyed him every year in the beginning of the summer. The same author adds, that besides many other victims, he sacrificed children to him, mostly sprung from noble families, and privately tre-

panned by the ministers of his cruelty, dispersed all over Italy for that purpose (2). Dio Cassius observes, that he caused several illustrious persons to be inhumanly murdered this year; and, among the rest, Seius Cærus, Valerianus Pætus, Silius Messala, and Pomponius Bassus, all senators of great distinction, for no other crime than having shewn an aversion to his conduct (3).

(1) Dio in Excerpt. Val. p. 762.
Heliog. Vit. p. 103.

(2) Herod. lib. v. p. 568.
(3) Dio, p. 908, 909.

nifies *waggish* or *gay*. He had greatly contributed to the rise of Heliogabalus; for, at his instigation, the troops near Emesa had declared for him; on which account the emperor immediately appointed him captain of the guards, and conferred upon him the consular ornaments. This year he honoured him with the consular dignity; and when his consulship expired, appointed him governor of Rome^f. Next year, when Gratus Sabinianus and Seleucus were consuls, Mæsa, foreseeing that the Romans could not long endure such a prince as Heliogabalus, prevailed upon him to adopt his cousin Alexianus, and declare him Cæsar, though at that time only twelve, or, at most, thirteen years old. The ceremony was performed with extraordinary pomp, and the young prince took the names of Alexander and Severus; the former from the king of Macedon, and the latter from the emperor, his supposed grandfather^g. Heliogabalus treated him at first in a very friendly and kind manner, hoping to draw him over to his lewd courses; but finding that the excellent youth could not be induced to follow his example, and that he was more beloved both by the people and soldiery than himself, he began to repent his having adopted him, and gave private orders to those who were trusted with the care of his education, to dispatch him. But all their attempts being rendered abortive, by the care and circumspection of Mamæa, mother to the young prince, and of his grandmother Mæsa, who betrayed all the emperor's secrets, Heliogabalus, transported with rage, ordered the senate to degrade Alexianus from the dignity of Cæsar, and annul the late adoption. At the same time he dispatched assassins to murder him; and, retiring to an old palace on Mount Esquilin, waited till news should be brought him of his death. But in the mean time, the prætorian guards, apprised of the danger that threatened the young prince, flew to the palace, and would have put the emperor himself to death, had he not gained them by prodigious promises, abandoned to their rage all his debauched companions, and such as were deemed enemies to Alexander; and solemnly declared, that he designed for the future to lead a different life, and to redress all the grievances of which, he said, they had but too much reason to complain^h.

Alexianus adopted, and created Cæsar.

Heliogabalus repents his adopting him, and attempts to destroy him.

Next year he entered upon his third consulship, and pretending to be reconciled to Alexander, chose him for his colleague; but being determined, at all events, notwith-

^f Dio, p. 888.

^g Herod. lib. v. p. 570.

^h Dio, p. 915.

Herod. lib. v. p. 570. Heliogab. Vit. p. 106,

standing

*The soldiers
mutiny.*

Yr. of Fl.
2570.
A. D. 222.
U. C. 970.

*Heliogaba-
lus and his
mother
Soemis
murdered.*

*Alexander
declared
emperor.*

standing his late protestations, to rid himself of so troublesome a rival, in the first place, he ordered all the senators to quit the city, lest they should frustrate his designs; and then, causing Alexander to be shut up in the palace, gave out, that he was suddenly taken ill, and almost past recovery. This report he circulated in order to discover the disposition of the soldiery; who no sooner heard it, than they flew to arms, and demanded to see Alexander. The young prince was accordingly brought to them, and by the emperor himself conducted to the camp, where he was received with the greatest demonstrations of joy, while no one took the least notice of Heliogabalus; a circumstance which provoked the tyrant to such a degree, that he ordered those who had applauded Alexander to be punished as traitors. But the rest, rescuing them out of the hands of the executioners, crowded about the emperor, uttering dreadful menaces; which so terrified him, that he attempted to save himself by flight, those who attended him to the camp endeavouring to disperse the multitude. A quarrel ensued between the partisans of the two princes, in which those who favoured Heliogabalus were soon defeated, and cut in pieces, with Hierocles, that prince's chief favourite, the captains of the guards, and all the ministers who attended him. The emperor himself withdrew, during the contest, into the most filthy place of the camp, and consequently the most worthy of him, where he was soon discovered, and murdered by the enraged soldiery, together with his mother Soemis, who had retired thither with him, and held him the whole time in her arms. Both their heads were struck off; and after their bodies were ignominiously dragged through the city, and most outrageously insulted by the populace, that of Heliogabalus was, with a great weight fastened to it, thrown from the Æmilian bridge into the Tiber¹. Such was the deserved end of Heliogabalus, the most wicked and most debauched of all the Roman emperors, in the eighteenth year of his age, after he had reigned three years, nine months, and four days. The senate caused the name of Antoninus, which he had assumed and disgraced with his lewd life, to be erased from the public registers, and all inscriptions; and passed a decree, excluding for ever women from the senate, and loading with curses such as should for the future attempt to transgress this law.

Upon the death of Heliogabalus, his cousin Alexander, then in the fourteenth year of his age, was proclaimed em-

¹ Herod. p. 573. Heliog. Vit. p. 106.

peror by the soldiery, and conducted from the camp to the senate, where he was received with all possible demonstrations of joy, and honoured with the titles of Augustus, of Father of his Country, and all the other marks of distinction peculiar to the imperial dignity. At the same time they offered him the name of Antoninus, and the surname of Great; but he modestly declined them both. He was the son of Julia Mamæa, or Mammæa, and of Genesius Marcianus, a Syrian. He was a native of the city of Acra in Phœnicia, and born, according to Lampridius ^k, in a temple consecrated to Alexander the Great; whence, upon his being adopted by Heliogabalus, he took the name of Alexander. His former name was Bassianus, according to Dio-Cassius; but, if we follow Herodian, Alexianus, his grandfather's name. His father dying when he was very young, his mother brought him up with great care, employing only such persons to instruct him as were equally renowned for their probity and learning. He applied himself from his infancy to the study of the Greek and Latin tongues, and was as well versed in the former as any man of his age; but his improvement in the latter was not so great, as appeared from his speeches to the senate, to the soldiery, and to the people^l; neither did he admire the Latin eloquence so much as the Greek. He was well skilled in all the other branches of polite learning, and had made great progress in the arts of painting, singing, and playing upon instruments. From his infancy he gave innumerable instances of a most mild, humane, and generous temper; shewed an utter aversion to bloodshed, and all manner of cruelty; and made it his chief study to please and oblige, not only his parents and relations, but even his domestics.

His birth and education.

His mother Julia Mammæa.

As he paid an entire deference to his mother Mamæa, and grandmother Mæsa, both women of great experience and extraordinary parts, at their desire he chose, as soon as he was raised to the empire, sixteen senators for his council, all men of known integrity, and long experienced in public affairs. The respect he paid to his mother was so great, that Herodian reckons it among his faults; for though he was himself a man of extraordinary talents, of such discernment and penetration, says Lampridius, that no one ever deceived him, yet he constantly preferred her opinion to his own^m. He gave her name to several buildings, which they still retained in the fourth centuryⁿ; and caused her to be honoured with the titles of Augusta, of

His counsellors.

^k Vit. Alex. p. 114.
p. 575.

^l Ibid. p. 115.
ⁿ Ammian. lib. xxviii. p. 372.

^m Herod. lib. vi.

*Alexander
favours the
Christians.*

Mother of her Country, of the Armies, and of the Senate, which had been formerly conferred on Julia, the wife of Severus^o. As Mamæa professed, in all likelihood, the Christian religion, no wonder that Alexander shewed great indulgence to the Christians, and would not suffer them to be prosecuted on account of their religious tenets. He seems to have been well acquainted with the morals of the Christian religion; for he had constantly in his mouth that golden rule, "Do as you would be done by;" caused it to be set up over the gates of his palace, and on several public edifices; and observed it himself, if the writers of his life may be credited, with the greatest exactness^p. During the first year of his reign, he was wholly engaged in reforming the many enormous abuses which had prevailed in the court under his predecessor. With this view he banished all the freedmen, slaves, eunuchs, players, and buffoons, who had borne any authority in the late reign; and chose in their room persons of blameless characters and known integrity.

*Discharges
the mini-
sters of the
late empe-
ror.*

Having by these means reformed the court, he made a strict enquiry into the manners and conduct of the public officers, especially of the governors of provinces; and discharged most of those who had been employed by Helio-gabalus. Such as had oppressed the people committed to their care, were banished; and the rest reduced to their former condition, as persons altogether unfit for any public office. Next year, when L. Marius Maximus and L. Roscius Ælianus were consuls, the emperor's nuptials were celebrated with extraordinary pomp and magnificence. He married Sulpitia Memmia, the daughter of Sulpitius, a consular, and grand-daughter of Catulus. As the whole empire enjoyed at this time a profound peace, nothing remarkable happened either at Rome, or in the provinces, in the two following years; in the first of which Julianus and Crispinus were consuls, and, in the second, Fuscus and

Yr. of Fl.

^{2574.}

A. D. 226.

U. C. 974.

*The Per-
sian empire
re-esta-
blished.*

Dexter. But in the fourth year of Alexander's reign, Artaxerxes, having utterly ruined the Parthian, and re-established the Persian empire, advanced at the head of a powerful army against the Romans, with a design to recover Mesopotamia, and the other provinces which had formerly belonged to the Persians. His approach occasioned great consternation in Syria; and many of the Romans quartered in Mesopotamia, abandoning the castles which they garrisoned, lifted in his army; so that he might with great ease have over-run not only Mesopotamia, but likewise Syria, had he not attacked the city of Atræ, before which

^o Spon. p. 194.

^p Alex. Vit. p. 132.

place he lost such numbers of his men, without being able to reduce it, that, dropping for the present his expedition against the Romans, he was forced to march back into his own country, after having ravaged great part of Media, and made some unsuccessful attempts upon Armenia ¹.

The sixth year of Alexander's reign, during the consulship of Modestus and Probus, was remarkable for the death of the celebrated civilian Domitius Ulpianus, who, being appointed captain of the prætorian guards, and endeavouring to establish the ancient discipline, provoked their hatred to such a degree, that, after having in vain solicited Alexander to remove him, they at length murdered him in the emperor's presence. The chief authors of his death were punished with the utmost severity, and the most factious among the guards ignominiously discharged. In the room of Ulpian, the emperor preferred Decimus, and Julius Paulus, a native of Padua, who had been banished by Heliogabalus, and was perhaps as well skilled in the laws as Ulpian ².

The death of Ulpian.

During this year several tumults happened at Rome, and in the provinces. The troops quartered in Mesopotamia revolted, murdered their general Flavius Heracleo, and deserted in great numbers to the Persians. The troops in Syria proclaimed Taurinus emperor, who, as they had conferred that honour upon him against his will, made his escape; and being pursued by the mutinous soldiery, threw himself into the Euphrates, and was drowned ³. Zosimus and Syncellus speak of Uranus, who, having usurped the empire at Edeffa in Osrhoene, was defeated by the troops that remained faithful to Alexander. At Rome, the prætorian guards attempted to raise Antoninus to the empire; but he declining that distinction, withdrew into the country, and never afterwards appeared in the city ⁴. But Ovinus Camillus, a senator, sprung from one of the most illustrious families in Rome, studying to gain the affections of the soldiery, in order to raise himself, by their means, to the empire, Alexander was no sooner informed of his private practices, than he sent for him to court, and thanked him for offering to take upon himself so great a burden, styled him his colleague, took him with him to the senate, allotted him an apartment in the palace, caused him to be attired in a far more pompous habit than his own, and treated him in every respect as his partner in the empire.

The soldiers mutiny in several provinces.

Ovinus Camillus, aspiring to the empire, how treated by Alexander.

¹ Dio, lib. lxxx. p. 918, & in Excerpt. Val. p. 769. Herod. lib. vi. p. 176. ² Vit. Alex. p. 122. ³ Dio, lib. lxxx. p. 917, 918. ⁴ Syncell. p. 357. Zos. p. 639.

As a war broke out at this time, which required the emperor's presence, Alexander offered the command of the army to Camillus; but he declining it, the emperor hoped he would at least share with him the fatigues and glory of that expedition. Accordingly they both departed from Rome on foot; but Camillus, who was not inured to a military life, being tired after five miles march, Alexander solicited him to pursue his journey on horseback; which he did for two days, when the emperor, perceiving he could no longer bear even that fatigue, ordered a chariot to be provided for him; which proved so great a mortification to Camillus, that he intreated leave to resign the empire, and return home; a request which Alexander readily granted, assuring him, before they parted, that he might live in safety where he pleased. Camillus retired to his country-seat, and there lived unmolested during the reign of Alexander; but was cut off by some of his successors, for what crime we are no-where informed^u. The expedition which Alexander is said to have undertaken, was probably against the Germans; for it appears, from some ancient inscriptions, that great advantages were gained over them this year, the seventh of the emperor's reign; and Lampridius tells us, that the Germans were overcome by Varius Marcinus, governor of Illyricum. The same year Furius Celus signalized himself in Mauritania Tingitana, and Junius Palmatus in Armenia, and were both rewarded with the consular ornaments.

In the following year Alexander entered upon his third consulship, having Dio Cassius, the second time consul, for his colleague. Dio was, in the beginning of this reign, in Asia; whence he passed into Bithynia, his native country, with a design to remain some time there with his friends and relations; but he was soon sent into Africa, to govern that province, with the character of proconsul. Upon his return to Rome, he was appointed governor of Illyricum, and thence removed into Upper Pannonia, where he revived the ancient military discipline among the troops, punishing the least neglect of duty with the utmost severity; insomuch that the prætorian guards, who dreaded his rigour, upon a report that he was recalled to command them, no sooner saw him appear in Rome, than they began to mutiny, and press the emperor to put him to death. But Alexander, without hearkening to their unjust demand, heaped many honours upon him, often appeared with him in public, and took him for his colleague in the

*Dio Cassius
hated by
the soldiery
on account
of his se-
verity.*

^u Vit. Alex. p. 130, 131, &c.

consulship: however, apprehensive that the soldiers might offer him some insult, if he appeared in Rome with the ensigns of the consular dignity, he advised him to retire from the city, and pass the time of his consulship in the country. Soon after he obtained leave to visit his own country, where he spent the remaining part of his life in quiet and retirement*. This year Alexander, who did not spare his greatest friends, when manifestly convicted of abusing the confidence he reposed in them, caused Vetrinus Taurinus, one of his chief favourites, to be deprived of life for a crime of that nature (M). L. Virius

* Dio, lib. lxxx. p. 918.

(M) The emperor had a particular esteem and kindness for Turinus, and often consulted him in private, as he was a man of extraordinary abilities, about affairs of the greatest importance. This honour and deference, which the emperor seemed to pay to him, the crafty courtier resolved to turn to his own advantage: and accordingly gave out, that Alexander transacted nothing without his advice; that he had gained an absolute authority over him; and that it was in his power to raise whom he pleased to the first employments in the empire. By these means he accumulated immense wealth in a short time; all who wanted any favour or preferment, recurring to Turinus, whose interest was not to be gained without rich presents. He often did not so much as mention to the emperor the persons whom he pretended to recommend; but nevertheless, when they happened to obtain, by means of others, what they demanded, he assumed the whole merit of it to himself, and exacted a proportionable acknowledgement, which in those days was called selling smoke.

The emperor, who was a man of great penetration, at length suspected his favourite of such practices; and therefore a person, in whom he could confide, soliciting him one day for a favour, he told him he would grant him his request, provided he privately addressed Turinus for his recommendation. Turinus, glad of this opportunity, promised to employ all his interest in his behalf; and soon after told him, that he had already recommended him to the emperor, who he was sure would grant him the desired favour the very first time he had an opportunity of urging his suit again, which he hoped would be very soon. He added, that he deserved to be rewarded for his trouble; and the petitioner referring that to his discretion, he not only exacted a large sum for what he pretended to have done, but obliged him to promise, in the presence of witnesses, a far more considerable one, to be paid as soon as he obtained his request. The emperor, who was informed of the whole, immediately granted the favour; which Turinus no sooner knew, than he obliged his

rius Agricola, and Sex. Catus Clementinus being consuls, the emperor retired into Campania, and there passed this and the following year, when Pompeianus and Pelignianus were consuls ².

The next consuls were Lupus and Maximus; during whose administration Artaxerxes, the restorer of the Persian monarchy, having reduced all the neighbouring countries, unexpectedly invaded the Roman dominions at the head of a numerous army, ravaged Mesopotamia, and advanced to the very confines of Syria. In consequence of this invasion Alexander, following the advice of his council, dispatched ambassadors with a letter to that conqueror, exhorting him not to engage the two empires in a long and dangerous war, without provocation, and reminding him of the victories gained over the eastern nations by Augustus, Trajan, L. Verus, and Severus. But Artaxerxes, elated by his late successes, despised the remonstrances of Alexander, and pursued his ravages in Mesopotamia, laid siege to Nisibis, and entering Cappadocia, destroyed all with fire and sword. The emperor, therefore, resolved to march against them in person; and accordingly, to the great grief both of the senate and people, left Rome in the spring of this year 232, the eleventh of his reign, bending his march through Illyricum, where he was joined by the troops quartered in that province: he arrived at Antioch about the beginning of the autumn; whence he sent a second embassy to Artaxerxes, hoping that his presence would add some weight to the reasons he had formerly alleged. But the haughty Persian, deriding the peaceable temper of the Ro-

*Artaxerxes
invades the
Roman do-
minions.*

Yr. of Fl.
2580.

A. D. 232,
U. C. 980.

*Alexander
hastens to
Antioch.*

* Norris, Epist. Consul. p. 146. Birag. p. 313.

his client, though he had never once mentioned his name to the emperor, to perform his engagement, and pay the promised sum, pretending, that by his means alone he had obtained what he desired. Hereupon Alexander caused a diligent enquiry to be made into his former conduct, when it appeared that he had received large sums, not only from those who had obtained any preferment, but from such too as had law-suits,

and often from both parties; which so enraged the emperor, that he accused him to the senate, who sentenced him to death; and the sentence was put in execution in the following manner: the criminal was, by the emperor's orders, tied to a gibbet, and suffocated with the smoke of green wood and wet stubble, kindled round him, the public crier in the mean time proclaiming "He who sold smoke dies with smoke (1)."

(1) Alex. Vit. p. 124, 125.

man emperor, chose four hundred of the tallest men in his army, and sent them, well mounted, and richly apparelled and armed, to acquaint the Romans and their emperor, that the great monarch Artaxerxes ordered them to retire immediately from Syria and Asia, and all the countries between the Euphrates and the Ægean Sea, which had formerly belonged to the Persians. Alexander heard their message with great temper, and then caused the ambassadors to be stript of their rich armour and apparel, and sent under a guard into Phrygia, where he allotted them houses and lands to cultivate.

*Haughty
embassy of
the Persian
monarch.*

He now began to prepare vigorously for war, ordered the legions, quartered in the different provinces of the East, to join him with all possible expedition, caused a great number of warlike engines to be constructed, and dispatched officers into all parts to raise fresh levies. In imitation of Alexander the Great, for whose memory he had a particular veneration, he armed some companies of foot with shields covered with gold and silver, and formed six legions into a body of thirty thousand men, which he called his phalanx. These distinguished themselves, during the war, in a very extraordinary manner, and were, when it was ended, rewarded for their services with double pay* (N).

*Alexander
prepares
for war.*

At

* Herod. lib. vi. p. 579.

z Alex. Vit. p. 131.

(N) Lampridius tells us, that the emperor being informed, soon after his arrival at Antioch, that some of his soldiers were gone to Daphne, and there bathed with the lewd women of that dissolute place, he immediately ordered them to be arrested and laid in irons. Hereupon the whole legion, to which they belonged, beginning to mutiny, Alexander, without betraying the least fear, told them, that as the ancient discipline was the principal, and indeed only support of the empire, he was resolved to maintain it at all events, and punish with the utmost severity, even with death, those disorders and debaucheries which had been allowed in the late reign. At

these words the whole legion began to utter their rage in horrible outcries; but Alexander, exclaimed with an air of authority, "Silence! I command silence! Keep these clamours to terrify the Persians, the Sarmatians, and the Germans: you have learned of those who taught you the art of war, that you are to frighten the enemy with that savage noise, and not your emperor, who, at the expence of his people, maintains, clothes, and pays you: forbear, therefore, these unreasonable clamours, which are only fit for battle, lest I disband you all, or inflict upon you a more severe punishment." Hereupon the uproar increasing, and some of the boldest even menac-

*Marches
against the
Persians.
His care of
the military
discipline,
and of the
soldiery.*

At length Alexander took the field at the head of a numerous army, observing in all his marches and motions such order and discipline, that his camp seemed a well-governed city, his soldiers citizens, and his officers so many senators^a. He severely punished such as offered the least injury to any of the inhabitants of the countries through which he marched. But notwithstanding his great severity, no emperor was ever more beloved both by the officers and soldiers, as no prince ever rewarded them with more generosity when they complied with their duty, took more care of them when sick or wounded, or supplied them on all occasions more plentifully with provisions. He kept constantly in his cabinet certain registers, in which were marked the names of all the officers and soldiers, the provinces where they were quartered, the time of their service, the dates of their commissions, the names of the persons at whose recommendation they had been preferred, their exploits, if they had performed any, their good and evil qualities. These registers he frequently perused, and by these means became acquainted with most of the officers and soldiers of his different armies, often mentioned their names, and preferred only persons of merit. When they were sick he visited them in their tents, even the common soldiers, supplied them with carriages, and suffered them to

^a Vit. Alex. p. 130.

nacing him with their swords ;
" Reserve your menaces (said he) for the enemy ; them you may frighten, but not me, who despise your impotent rage : should you murder me, the republic will not be at a loss to find a successor, who will punish you according to your deserts." As the mutiny still continued, he cried out with a loud voice, " I disband you all ; citizens, lay down your arms, and disperse." With these words the whole legion was thunderstruck ; they obeyed, quitted their arms, laid down even their military garments, and retired in silence, while the emperor's guards took up their

standards, and carried them, together with the arms of the disbanded legion, to the camp. However, before the emperor marched against the Persians he restored them, upon the intercession of several persons of distinction, to their former rank, after having punished with death their tribunes, for having suffered the soldiers under their command to transgress with impunity the military laws, and for neglecting to suppress the tumult. This legion signalized themselves above the rest in the Persian war, and shewed more concern for the death of Alexander than any other (1).

(1) Vit. Alex. p. 133, & seq.

want

want nothing that could relieve or comfort them in their sickness. If they were not in a condition to pursue their march, he recommended them to the care of persons of known integrity and humanity, whom he rewarded with great generosity for their trouble, whether the soldiers died or recovered. He was always ready to listen to the complaints of the meanest in the army against their tribunes and other officers, punishing them, when guilty, according to the quality of their crime, without any favour or distinction. He frequently distributed large sums among them, ascribing chiefly to their poverty the disorders they committed. They were all so well clothed and armed, says Lampridius, and the cavalry so well mounted, that nothing gave a more true idea of the grandeur of the Roman empire, than the army of Alexander Severus. In his marches he caused provisions to be prepared at the several places where the army was to encamp; whereas, before his time, each soldier used to carry with him subsistence for seventeen days. In the enemies country, where he could not use that precaution, he ordered the necessary provisions to be carried on horses, mules, and camels; a precaution which gained him the affections of the soldiery, and at the same time rendered his marches so quick and expeditious, that he is said in most of his wars to have surprised the enemy. In his garb and dress he little varied from the common soldiers, and his diet was the same with their's. He constantly dined and supped in public, with his tent open, and in the sight of the whole army; and visited, before he withdrew to repose, each quarter in the camp. Thus, partly by a reasonable severity, partly by his affable and condescending behaviour, he re-established the ancient discipline among the troops, which had been entirely neglected in the reign of Heliogabalus; and gained, by his firmness and intrepidity, such an authority over them, as to disband whole legions; which no emperor had attempted since the time of Julius Cæsar^b.

*He is both
feared and
beloved by
the soldiery.*

With an army thus disciplined, the emperor marched early in the spring of this year 233, against Artaxerxes, who, elated with his former successes, would agree to no terms, however reasonable; but advanced towards the frontiers of the Roman dominions at the head of an army consisting of an innumerable multitude of foot, and one hundred and thirty thousand horse, with eighteen hundred chariots armed with scythes, and seven hundred elephants bearing towers on their backs, filled with archers, after the Persian

^b Vit. Alexi p. 120, 121, 130.

*The success
of his ex-
pedition
against the
Parthians.*

manner^c: Alexander, having divided his army into three bodies, ordered one to enter Media, another to march into the country of the Parthians, and conducted himself the third, which consisted of the flower of the army, at an equal distance from the other two. These three divisions having joined at an appointed place, proceeded together, until they were met by Artaxerxes, who gave the Romans battle without delay. The Persians were defeated; and on this occasion Alexander performed all the offices of an excellent general and intrepid soldier^c (O).

After this victory, Alexander returned to Antioch, designing to pursue the war with fresh vigour the following

^c Alex. Vit. p. 133.

(O) The numerous army of Artaxerxes was totally routed, and that conqueror obliged, notwithstanding his former victories and conquests, to save himself by a precipitate flight. The particulars of this engagement we may learn from Alexander himself, who, on his return to Rome, gave the senate an account of this memorable expedition in the following speech: "Conscript fathers, we have overcome the Persians, and there is no need of great eloquence to acquaint you with the particulars of the victory. The enemy came with seven hundred elephants, the greatest number ever seen together in the field. These carried towers upon their backs, filled with archers and arrows. Three hundred of the elephants we took, two hundred we killed upon the spot, and eighteen we have brought hither. They had eighteen hundred chariots armed with scythes, of which we took two hundred. We have cut in pieces an army of one hundred and twenty thousand horse, and ten thousand men armed cap à pée, with whose spoils we have

enriched our troops. We took a great number of prisoners, whom we have sold. The country of Mesopotamia, lying between the Tigris and the Euphrates, which my predecessor Heliogabalus had neglected, we have reconquered, and brought again under subjection. We have put the most potent king Artaxerxes, as he is styled, to flight; the country of Persia beheld him flying for the first time. In the place where the Romans formerly lost their ensigns and standards, the Persians have now lost theirs. You see, conscript fathers, what the legions have achieved; the subject needs no eloquence to adorn it; the army is returned rich, and loaded with booty. It is incumbent upon you to appoint public thanksgivings for so signal a victory, that we may not seem ungrateful to the gods, who have blessed our arms with such success (1)." This speech, Lampridius assures us, he copied from the journals of the senate, and found it, word for word, in the works of many historians.

(7) Vit. Alex. p. 130, 131.

year;

year ; but, in the mean time, being informed, that the Germans had invaded the Roman dominions, and that Artaxerxes had disbanded great part of his army for want of provisions, he resolved to quit the East, and return to Rome, apprehending greater evils from the Germans than from the Persians. Accordingly, having erected several forts in Mesopotamia, and left numerous garrisons to defend them, he left Antioch in the spring of the following year, when Maximus and Urbanus were consuls ; and, arriving at Rome, was received by persons of all ranks with the greatest demonstrations of joy. He entered the city in triumph, his chariot being drawn, not by four white horses, as was usual, but by four of the elephants which he had taken *. When the ceremony was over, he went to the senate, where he made the speech we have related above. From the senate he repaired to the Capitol, and consecrated some of the Persian spoils to Jupiter Capitolinus. Then turning to the people, " I have overcome the Persians (said he), and the army is returned loaded with booty. I promise you a largess, and propose to exhibit to-morrow the Circensian sports." From the Capitol he walked to the palace, followed by his triumphal chariot, and attended by the senate, the equestrian order, and such crouds of people, all crying, " Rome is safe, while Alexander is safe," that with much difficulty he reached the palace in four hours. Next day he exhibited the Circensian sports, gave the promised bounty, and, in honour of his mother, established a fund for the maintenance of the children of the poor citizens, who were thence called the children of Mamæa.

In the mean time news being brought to Rome, that the Germans, and other northern nations, had passed the Rhine and the Danube in great numbers, the emperor, to the inexpressible grief of the senate and people, hastened with his victorious army into Gaul, to stem this furious torrent. In the beginning of the following year, when Severus and Quinctianus were consuls, Alexander advanced with his army to the banks of the Rhine ; but finding the enemy had repassed that river upon his approach, he ordered a bridge to be built over it, with a design to attack them in their own country, as soon as the season would allow him to take the field *. Herodian, who paints Alexander as a weak and timorous prince, tells us, that he sent ambassadors to the Germans with proposals of peace, which he even offered to purchase at any price ; and adds, that,

Yr. of Fl.
2582.
A. D. 234-
U. C. 982.

*Alexander
returns to
Rome, and
triumphs.*

*He leaves
Rome, to
march a-
gainst the
Germans ;*

*who re-
tire at his
approach.*

* Alex. Vit. p. 135. Fesk. p. 553.

* Vit. Alex. p. 137.

during

*The Gaul-
ish legions
complain of
the severity
of Alexan-
der.*

during the time of this shameful negotiation, he diverted himself with driving chariots, and other unprincely exercises; a conduct which provoked the soldiers, and occasioned his ruin^f. But Lampridius clears the emperor from these unmerited aspersions; and ascribes the discontent of the soldiery, that is, of the legions quartered in Gaul, to their licentiousness, and to the severity of Alexander, which they could not endure, after having been, under Heliogabalus, long habituated to idleness and all manner of debauchery.

*They are
encouraged
by Maxi-
minus.*

Among these troops was one Maximinus, a Goth, whom Alexander, in reward of his valour, had preferred to the command of a body of Pannonians; but he, unmindful of his duty, and of the obligations he owed the emperor, instead of attempting to appease the licentious and discontented soldiery, artfully fomented the tumult, and, by his seditious speeches, inspired the multitude with contempt for Alexander, as a sovereign who was governed by a woman, meaning Mamæa, and consequently unfit for carrying on the war with vigour. The emperor was then either at Mentz or Sicilia, in the territory of Treves, between Boppard and Bingen. As Alexander had but a small body of troops with him, Maximinus resolved to seize that opportunity, to dispatch him, not doubting but the troops under his command, whom he had corrupted, would, upon the death of that prince, proclaim him emperor. He imparted his design to some of the most bold and resolute among the soldiers, who, animated with the hopes of great preferments, readily engaged to put his scheme in execution, and immediately set out for the place where the emperor resided, which they contrived to reach about an hour after mid-day, when the emperor's attendants were withdrawn to refresh themselves, according to the Roman custom, with a short sleep after dinner. They no sooner appeared, than the few soldiers upon guard fled with precipitation, having probably been privately seduced by Maximinus. Mamæa, alarmed at the unexpected noise and tumult, ran out, attended by the captains of the guards, to appease it; but the assassins, having first murdered both her and them, entered the emperor's tent with their drawn swords, who, as he was unarmed, and alone, threw his imperial mantle over his face, and received, without uttering a single word, the many blows with which they dispatched him, deriding him the whole time as a child unfit to be at the head of an army, and inveighing against his mother,

^f Herod. lib. vi. p. 385, 589.

whose only care was to amass riches. Such was the tragical and undeserved end of Alexander Severus, after he had lived, according to the most probable opinion, twenty-six years, five months, and nineteen days, and reigned thirteen years and nine days. The loss of no prince was ever more regretted by the senate, the people, and the soldiery, than that of Alexander, who, by his wise administration, had gained the affections of all his subjects. The senate immediately decreed, both to him and his mother Mamaea, divine honours; appointed them altars, priests, and sacrifices; and instituted, in honour of the deceased emperor, an annual feast, which was celebrated on the first of October, Alexander's birth-day^b. The soldiers were no sooner apprised of his death, than they put to the sword all who had been accessory to the crime, except the chief author of it, Maximinus, who persuading the soldiery that he had no concern in the murder, escaped, for the present, the deserved punishment.

Alexander is assassinated.

Alexander was, according to the testimony of all the ancients, Herodian alone excepted, one of the best and wisest princes that ever swayed a sceptre; and, had he lived longer, would have entirely reformed those abuses which, after his death, involved the empire in dreadful calamities. He was sparing of the public money, liberal of his own, kind and generous to all good men; but an irreconcilable enemy to the wicked, severely punishing such as were convicted of having plundered the provinces, and oppressed the people committed to their care. These he never spared, though his friends, favourites and kinsmen; but sentenced them to death, and caused them to be executed, notwithstanding their quality, or former services, like common malefactors. He maintained, that it was not a sufficient punishment to deprive corrupt magistrates and governors of their places; but that, as the trust reposed in them was great, they ought to pay for the breach of it with their lives. He banished one of his secretaries for giving to his council, in writing, a false account of a transaction; and caused the sinews of his fingers to be cut, that he might never write for the future. One of his slaves, convicted of having received a bribe, he caused to be crucified on the road which led from the city to the villa where he frequently resided; that, by the sight of the body, which was left on the cross, his other slaves might be deterred from the like practices¹. He never pardoned any crime committed against the public; but suf-

His character.

His hatred to those who robbed the public.

^a Vict. Epit. Zof. lib. i. p. 639. Herodian. lib. vi. p. 587.
^b Alex. Vit. p. 136. ¹ Alex. Vit. p. 124.

ferred no person to be condemned, till his cause was thoroughly heard, and his offence evidently proved. He retrenched all the pensions which Heliogabalus had settled on his freedmen, buffoons, stage-players, charioteers, and gladiators; saying, that the emperor was but the steward of the people, and therefore could not, without the utmost injustice, thus wantonly squander away their revenues upon improper persons.

His deference to the senate.

He was the first emperor who allowed the senators to sit when they came to attend him. He appointed no governors or magistrates, without consulting them; and never failed to prefer those they recommended. He admitted none into the senate without the concurrence and approbation of all the members of that body, asking the opinion of each in particular, and examining, with great strictness, into the manners and former conduct of the person to be admitted. If, upon this enquiry, he was found unworthy, the senators who had recommended him were themselves degraded; and such as had given testimony of his probity, condemned, as in cases of perjury, to lose their estates, and banished for ever. He never admitted either freedmen, or their children, to the equestrian order, which he used to call "the nursery of the senate." He decreed, that the captains of the guards should no longer be chosen from the equestrian, but only from the senatorial order; that no one should have the power of judging a senator, but who was himself one; for the captains of the guards had been long the ordinary judges of the senators in cases of treason^k. Thus, by degrees, the captains became the most powerful officers in the state, and their office more considerable than even that of the consuls; which, in the end, ruined the authority of the senate.

He bestows the office of captain of the guards only on senators.

Impartial in the administration of justice.

In the administration of justice Alexander never decided any law-suit, without advice of his council, which consisted of the most learned civilians in Rome, whom he obliged to give their opinions in writing, after having allowed them time to examine and weigh circumstances at their leisure, that they might not pronounce sentence without due premeditation. Thus were all matters of justice determined by persons of known integrity, well skilled in the laws. In military affairs he consulted only such persons as had acquired experience by their long service, and were well acquainted with the situation of places, or men versed in history, enquiring of them what had at any time been done on the like occasions by his predecessors, or other great captains.

^k Alex. Vit. p. 120.

He is said never to have given any public office, from favour or friendship; but to have employed such only as were both by himself and the senate judged the best qualified for the discharge of the trust reposed in them. He preferred one to the command of the guards, who had retired into the country on purpose to avoid that office, saying, that with him the declining such eminent stations was the best recommendation. He would not suffer any honourable employments to be sold, saying, he who buys, must sell in his turn; and it would be unjust to punish the man for selling, after he has been suffered to buy. In appointing governors of provinces he observed a commendable custom, which was to publish their names, and encourage all persons to declare, either in public or private, whether they had any accusation to lay to their charge: "Since Jews and Christians, (said he on this occasion) use such commendable methods in the choice of their priests, it is reasonable we should proceed with the like care in the choice of rectors of provinces, who are entrusted with the lives and fortunes of so many persons." As he punished, with the utmost severity, those who betrayed their trust, so he rewarded, with great generosity, such as had answered the good opinion he entertained of them, and either raised them to employments of greater profit, or, if they chose to retire, presented them with houses and lands, saying, that, since corrupt governors enriched themselves at the expence of the people, good governors ought to be enriched at the expence of the prince¹.

Prefers only persons of merit.

He was an enemy to all pomp and shew, and extremely modest in his apparel, maintaining, that a prince ought to be distinguished from the rest, not by his apparel, but by his bravery, and virtuous actions. The rich presents sent him by foreign princes he bestowed on the temples; but sold all the jewels, employing the money arising from them to the relief of the poor citizens. The ambassadors of an eastern prince having presented the empress with two pearls of an extraordinary size, Alexander ordered them to be sold; but no one being found rich enough to purchase them, he consecrated them as pendants to a statue of Venus, that the empress might not, by her example, encourage luxury in others. He kept such a small number of slaves and freedmen, that, when he gave any public entertainment, he was obliged to use those of his friends, and also to borrow their plate; for he sold all the gold, and most of the silver-plate belonging to the palace, to defray the necessary charges of

Alexander an enemy to all pomp and shew.

¹ Alex. Vit. p. 119, &c.

*Reduces
the taxes.*

the government without burdening the people. He reduced the imposts with which Heliogabalus had loaded both Rome and the provinces, to the thirtieth part; and suffered several cities to apply even that towards the repairing of their public buildings. He lent money without interest to the poor, to purchase houses and lands, allowing them time to pay the capital with the product of their lands. He was so far from filling the treasury at the expence of the people, that he could not bear the sight of those whose province it was to levy the taxes; he used to call them necessary evils, and never suffered one to continue in his office a full year. He filled, at a vast charge, the public granaries, which, upon his accession to the empire, he found almost empty; distributed weekly great quantities of oil and corn among the poor citizens; and allotted funds for the maintenance and education of their children^m. He would not suffer the money levied upon the public prostitutes and catamites to be returned into his private coffers, as other emperors had done; but allotted it for the reparation of the theatre, the circus, and the amphitheatre.

*His public
works.*

He built granaries in all parts of the city, for the use of those who had none of their own. Of these public and common granaries frequent mention is made by the ancients. He caused baths to be likewise erected in each quarter of the city; and, at his own expence, furnished them with wood, and oil for the lamps in the night; whereas before his time they were never opened till the rising, and were shut again at the setting of the sun. He built a great many fine houses for such of his friends and ministers as had served him faithfully, and lived without reproach. He furnished the governors of provinces, at their departure, with money, and other necessary articles; that is, according to Lampridius, with twenty pounds weight of silver, eight mules, two horses, two gowns, a hundred pieces of gold, one cook, one coachman, and one concubine, if the person he named was not married. He founded a great many free-schools in Rome, and took particular care of the children of noble, but decayed families. He embellished Rome with an incredible number of stately buildings; repaired most of the ancient structures, retaining the names of their first founders; and erected in the great square of Nerva statues in honour of most of the emperors his predecessors, with inscriptions on columns of brass, containing succinct accounts of all their memorable actions.

^m Alex. Vit. p. 124, 130.

Alexander was a great encourager of learning, took much delight in conversing with learned men, and spent all the time he could spare from public affairs in reading the Greek and Latin authors, especially Plato's Commonwealth, Tully's Offices, the works of Horace, of Virgil, whom he used to style the Plato of the poets, and of Serenus Sammonicus. He was himself well versed in all the branches of polite literature, and celebrated in verse the exploits of some of his predecessors^a. He applied himself chiefly to the study of judicial astrology, which was by his orders publicly taught at Rome; and pretended to be thoroughly acquainted with the science of the soothsayers and augurs; both as to the entrails of sacrifices, and the flight and chirping of birds. He often went to hear the poets and orators declaim in the public schools, but would not allow them to write any thing in his praise. In short, Alexander, to end the history of his reign with the words of Aurelius Victor, made it his constant study to encourage virtue and learning, to reform abuses, to restore the military discipline, and to discharge, with the greatest fidelity and disinterestedness, every duty of an excellent prince. His endeavours were attended with such success, that the empire would have still retained its former lustre, had those who succeeded him firmly maintained what he had so wisely established. Some of his predecessors, namely Trajan, Antoninus, and M. Aurelius, performed perhaps greater things; but were older when they came to the empire than Alexander was at the time of his death^c. Of the writers who flourished in his reign, the reader will find a succinct account in the note (P).

His learning.

CHAP.

^a Vit. Alex. p. 123:

^b Aur. Vict. in Vit. Alex.

(P) Lampridius, in his life of Alexander, often quotes Aecholius, Septimius, and Eucolpius; but seems to prefer Septimius to the other two (1). They flourished under Alexander, and wrote the history of that prince's reign. Gargilius Martialis likewise composed the history of the reign of Alexander, and is ranked by Vopiscus

among those historians who wrote with more exactness than elegance (2). Marius Maximus wrote the history of the emperors from Trajan to Alexander, and is often quoted by the Augustine writers. The life of Alexander was likewise published by Aurelius Philippus, his father's freedman (3); Julius Græbianus, who in-

(1) Vit. Alex. p. 119, 131, 136.
(3) Vit. Alex. p. 118.

(2) Vopisc. Prob. Vit. p. 234.

C H A P. LVIII.

The Roman History, from the Death of Alexander Severus to the Captivity of Valerian, when the Empire was usurped by thirty Persons at once, commonly called The Thirty Tyrants.

Maximinus declared emperor, and his son Maximinus.

THE murder of Alexander occasioned a great tumult and confusion in the army; during which the Pannonian troops, under the command of Maximinus, proclaimed him emperor. The rest, finding no other appeared to

trusted Alexander in rhetoric, left some declamations, which were extant in the time of Lampridius (4). Besides the celebrated civilians, Ulpianus and Paulus, Florentinus, Ælius Marcianus, Hermogenes or Hermogenianus, Callistrata, and Q. Claudius Venuleius Saturninus, whose names are famous in the Pandects, were all Papinian's disciples, and flourished under Alexander; as did likewise Herennius Modestinus, who was preceptor to Maximinus, the son of the emperor of that name, and compiled several books of jurisprudence, and, among the rest, one in Greek, on the excuses of guardians.

But the most famous of all the writers who flourished under Alexander, was the celebrated historian Dio Cassius, called also Cassius Cocceius or Cocceianus. He was a native of Nicæa in Bithynia, the son of Apronianus, who was governor of Cilicia about the year 183,

when the two brothers Quintilii were assassinated by Commodus's order (5). He was likewise for some time governor of Illyricum (6). His son was at Rome in the reign of Commodus, at least towards the latter part of it (7). He was senator in the year 192, the last of the reign of Commodus, and named prætor for the ensuing year by Pertinax, who had a particular kindness and esteem for him (8). He was appointed consul by the emperor Severus (9); attended, after that prince's death, his son Caracalla into the East (1), and spoke with him, for the last time, at Nicomedia, about the latter part of the year 215 (2). Macrinus named him to the government of Smyrna and Pergamus, which he held under Heliogabalus, and was still in Asia in the year 221 (3). From Asia he went into Bithynia, whence he was recalled, and appointed governor, first of

(4) Vit. Alex. p. 115. p. 310.

(6) Idem, lib. xlix. p. 413.

(5) Dio, lib. lxi. p. 782, & lib. lxxii. p. 818.

(7) Idem, lib. lxxii. p. 818.

(8) Idem ibid. p. 820, 827. & lib. lxxiii. p. 825.

(9) Idem, lib. lxxvi. p. 869.

(1) Idem, lib. lxxviii. p. 883, 884.

(2) Dio, lib. lxxix. p. 909.

(3) Idem, p. 915.

Africa,

to claim or dispute that title, followed their example, and took the usual oaths to Maximinus, after he had solemnly declared, that he had not been accessory to the death of Alexander. The new emperor immediately declared his son Maximinus, Cæsar, and prince of the Roman youth, invested him with the tribunitial and proconsular power, honoured him with the title of Augustus, and took him for his partner in the sovereignty. The senate, whom he acquainted, as soon as possible, with his accession to the empire, not daring to oppose the choice of the soldiery, confirmed it; so that Maximinus was, without the least opposition, acknowledged emperor by the senate, the people, and the army^p. He was, according to Syncellus^q, a native of Thrace; according to Herodian, Capitolinus, and Jordanes, born in a village on the confines of that province, and the country of the Barbarians. His father, named Micea, or Micca, was a Goth; and his mother Ababa, or

His extraction and pre-ferments.

^p Max. Vit. p. 142.

^q Sync. p. 361.

Africa, afterwards of Illyricum, and lastly of Pannonia; in which governments he acquitted himself so faithfully, that Alexander, upon his return to Rome, honoured him with a second consulship in the year 228 (4). Dio Cassius wrote in eight decades, that is, in eighty books, the Roman history, from the landing of Æneas in Italy, to the reign of the emperor Alexander (5); he spent ten years in collecting the necessary materials for so great a work, and twelve more in composing it (6). His account of the public transactions, from the reign of Commodus to that of Alexander, is very particular and minute; for he then began to write, not what he had learned from others, but what he had himself seen and observed. His style, according to Photius, is sublime, and answerable to the greatness of his subject. He

proposed Thucydides for his model, and does not, in the opinion of Photius, fall much short of that excellent writer (7). The first thirty-four books have been long since entirely lost; and of the thirty-fifth only some fragments are remaining: the following books, from the end of the thirty-fifth to the fifty-fourth, are thought to be entire; but the next six are, in some places, strangely mutilated and corrupted. Of the twenty last we have only some fragments published by Fulvius Ursinus and M. Valois. However, that great loss has been in some degree supplied by John Xiphilin, who was patriarch of Constantinople in the eleventh century, and epitomized Dio's history from the thirty-fifth book to the end. This epitome is greatly esteemed by the learned, and thought to be very exact.

(4) Dio, lib. lxxx. p. 917.
lib. lxxii, p. 829.

(5) Suid. p. 753.

(7) Phot. cap. 71. p. 105.

(6) Idem,

*His mighty
strength.*

*On what
occasion
first known
to the em-
peror Sep-
timius
Severus.*

Abala, an Alan^r. He is styled in the ancient inscriptions C. Julius Verus Maximinus. He was of a very mean extraction, and, in his early youth, a shepherd, but of a gigantic stature, being eight feet and an half tall, and besides exceedingly well shaped, all his limbs answering his stature in symmetry and proportion. Of his strength wonderful things are related by the ancients: he was often seen to draw a loaded waggon, which two oxen could scarce move, to tear up trees by the roots, to crumble pebbles between his fingers, &c. Besides, he was so bold and courageous, that he delighted in exposing himself to the greatest dangers: whence he was called, for his courage and valour, Achilles, Hector, and Ajax; for his strength, Hercules, Antæus, and Milo; but, at the same time, for his savage cruelty, Buziris, Phalaris, and Cyclops.

He was first known to the emperor Septimius Severus on the following occasion: that prince having exhibited, as he passed through Thrace, some military games and exercises in honour of his second son Geta, and proposed prizes for the conquerors, Maximinus, at that time about twenty years old, intreated the emperor, partly in the Latin, and partly in the Thracian language, for leave to enter the lists, and try his skill. The emperor, admiring his size, matched him, not with the soldiers, as he was a Barbarian, but with some of the strongest slaves in the camp; whom he overcame, sixteen one after the other. In consequence of these victories, the emperor ordered him to be lifted among the horse. A few days after, as the emperor was visiting the different quarters of the camp on horseback, Maximinus, accosting him, began to run by him. The emperor, to try whether he could run as well as he could wrestle, put his horse upon a full gallop, and rode quite round the camp, Maximinus keeping close by him the whole time, till both he and his horse were quite weary. Then turning to him, "Thracian (said he), art thou now disposed to wrestle?" "I am (answered Maximinus), as much as you please." The emperor immediately dismounted, and ordered some of the strongest soldiers, and best wrestlers, in the army, to enter the lists with him; of whom he overcame and threw down seven, as if they had been so many children. The emperor was so pleased with his strength and activity, that he presented him with a golden collar, placed him among his guards, and heaped many favours upon him, appointing him extraordinary allowances, the common pay not being sufficient to support him: for he used to eat, according to

^r Herod. lib. vi. p. 585. Jornand. Regn. cap. 22.

Julius Capitolinus, forty, according to Ælius Cardus, a more ancient historian, sixty pounds weight of flesh a-day; and to drink eight amphoræ of wine, that is, six gallons, without indulging to excess.

He was preferred by Caracalla to the post of a centurion: but quitted the army upon that prince's death, being unwilling to serve under Macrinus, the chief author of the murder, and retired to his own country. *Preferred by Caracalla.*

When Heliogabalus obtained the empire, he offered his service to him; and, being admitted again into the army, he was, by the interest of his friends, raised to the rank of a tribune; but always declined, under some pretence or other, attending the emperor, who had disoblged him with an impure jest, alluding to his amazing strength. He had even absented himself from Rome, not being able to endure the sight of that lewd monster; but returned thither when he understood, that Alexander was raised to the empire; and was by that prince received with the greatest demonstrations of kindness and esteem, recommended by him to the senate, created senator, and honoured with the command of a new-raised legion, which the emperor thought him well qualified to instruct in the military exercises. In that office he acquitted himself so successfully, that Alexander preferred him to a higher command, and, at the breaking out of the German war, charged him with the care of disciplining the new-raised troops, consisting chiefly of Pannonians. *He is greatly favoured by Alexander.*

Maximinus no sooner saw himself vested with the sovereign power, than he dismissed all who had been employed by Alexander in places of trust, and appointed creatures of his own in their room, selected, for the most part, out of the very dregs of the people. He made it his chief study to gain the affections of the soldiery; but choosing rather to be feared than loved by the rest of his subjects, he began his reign with unheard-of cruelties. All those who had been intimate with Alexander, or shewed the least concern for his death, were, by his orders inhumanly massacred; the senators, whom that prince had created were degraded; and the officers he had raised, under various pretences, discharged, and most of them banished. Being ashamed of the meanness of his extraction, he caused all those who knew his parents, or any of his family, to be privately murdered, though many of them had relieved him when in a low condition, and, by their interest, raised him in the army. His cruelty was exasperated by the conspiracy of Magnus, a consular of an illustrious family and great merit. He *His cruelty after his accession to the empire.*

The conspiracy of Magnus.

† Herod. lib. vi. p. 585. Max. Vit. p. 138, 139.

engaged several of Alexander's old soldiers to break down the bridge which that prince had built over the Rhine, after Maximinus had passed it, and abandon him to the enemy. But the conspiracy being discovered, all those whom Maximinus only suspected to have been privy to it, were inhumanly massacred, to the number of four thousand, without being tried, or even examined; a circumstance which induced many to believe, that the plot was only a contrivance of Maximinus, to rid himself of those who gave him umbrage^t.

The Ofrhoenians revolt.

A few days after the conspiracy of Magnus, the Ofrhoenians, who served in the army, and had been always greatly attached to the late emperor, no longer doubting that he had been assassinated by Maximinus's orders, openly revolted, proclaimed T. Quartinus emperor, and attired him, much against his inclination, with the imperial purple, and all the ensigns of sovereignty. But soon after Macedo, who had been the chief author of the revolt, and pretended great friendship for Quartinus, murdered him while he was reposing in his tent, and carried his head to Maximinus, who, instead of rewarding him according to his expectation, caused him to be executed for rebelling against his prince, and betraying his friend^u. The Ofrhoenians

Quartinus betrayed and murdered.

Maximinus gains several victories over the Germans.

returning to their duty after the death of Quartinus, the following year, when Severus and Quintianus were consuls, Maximinus entered Germany at the head of a powerful army, ravaged the country, burnt the enemy's habitations, carried off all their corn and cattle, and took an incredible number of prisoners. Several battles were fought in the woods and marshes, in each of which the emperor killed many of the enemy with his own hand, discharging every duty of a gallant soldier and experienced commander. He chose always to fight at the head of his troops, and often grappled with the enemy hand to hand like a common soldier. Having in one encounter, to encourage his men, rushed sword in hand into the midst of the enemy, he was surrounded on all sides, and must have been either killed or taken, notwithstanding his extraordinary strength, in which he placed too much confidence, had not his troops, animated by the example of their general, hastened to his rescue. He transmitted an account of his victories to the senate; telling them, among other things, that he had laid waste the enemy's country to the extent of four hundred miles; destroyed one hundred and fifty of their villages; taken

^t Max. Vit. p. 142. Herod. lib. vii. p. 589.
p. 590. Max. Vit. p. 142, &c.

^u Herod. lib. vii.

an incredible number of prisoners, and fought more battles than any of the ancients had ever seen. He ordered his exploits to be represented in painting, and hung up in the squares and public places at Rome. For these victories the senate decreed both to him and his son, the title of Germanicus, which is still to be seen on several of his medals *.

From Germany he marched into Illyricum, and having passed the winter at Sirmium in Pannonia, where he entered upon his first consulship, and took Africanus for his colleague, early in the spring he led his army into the countries of the Dacians and Sarmatians, gained several victories over those barbarous nations, and obliged them to submit to such terms as he was pleased to impose. He had nothing less in view than to extend the borders of the empire to the northern ocean; a design which he would have easily accomplished, says Herodian †, had he not been interrupted by a civil war, and great commotions at home, occasioned by his detestable cruelty and insatiable avarice. He encouraged informers, feigned plots, and condemned, without distinction of quality, sex, or age, all who were accused, seizing their estates, and reducing the richest families in Rome to beggary. Persons of the greatest distinction were snatched away from their friends and relations, and, upon various groundless accusations, carried into Pannonia, to be judged by the emperor, who never failed to condemn them either to death or banishment, and to confiscate their estates, whether the crimes laid to their charge were proved or not. Not satisfied with the wealth of so many illustrious families, he plundered the temples, stripped the public buildings of their ornaments, and seized on the public money in the cities, allotted for the maintenance or diversions of the people. This rapacity alarmed the populace, and disposed them to a general revolt, which first broke out in Africa, about the middle of May of the ensuing year, when Perpetuus and Cornelianus were consuls, on the following occasion: two young men of great distinction being condemned by the emperor's receiver in that province, who oppressed the people in a most tyrannical manner, to pay a fine which would have reduced them to beggary, conspired to save their fortunes by destroying him; and accordingly, having gained some soldiers of the legion quartered there, they rushed upon him unexpectedly, and cut in pieces both him and the soldiers who attempted to defend him.

Yr. of Fl.

2584.

A. D. 236.

U. C. 984.

*Overcomes
the Dacians and
Sarmatians.*

His cruelty.

*The people
in Africa
revolt.*

* Goltz, p. 101, 102. Birag. p. 329. † Herod. lib. vii. p. 591.

*Gordian
proclaimed
emperor in
Africa.*

This murder, they well knew, the emperor would never pardon; therefore, well apprised that the only means of escaping the punishment due to their crime, was to create a new prince, they openly revolted, and, with the concurrence of the people, who could no longer bear the tyrannical government of Maximinus, proclaimed Gordianus, at that time proconsul of Africa, emperor in his room. Gordianus was descended of an illustrious family, possessed of immense wealth, and universally beloved both at Rome and in the provinces, many of which he had governed, on account of his extraordinary merit and virtues; but as he was advanced in years, being at this time eighty and upwards, when the people broke unexpectedly into his house, and saluted him with the title of Augustus, he threw himself upon the ground, and begged, with many tears, they would suffer him to spend the poor remains of his life in peace, and choose some other more able to deliver the state from the tyrannical yoke under which it groaned. But the people, and at their head Mauritius, a person of great authority among them, continuing unalterable in their former resolution, Gordianus was constrained to accept the ensigns and title of emperor; which he had no sooner done, than, to the inexpressible joy of all the Africans, he took his son, who bore the same name, was then his lieutenant, and had been consul, for his partner in the empire. From Thydrus, an important city in Byzacene, not far from Adrumetum, where this transaction happened, Gordianus marched to Carthage, and made his entry, arrayed with the imperial purple, amidst the acclamations of the people, saluting him with the title of Gordianus Africanus.

*He writes
to the senate*

From Carthage he wrote to the senate and people of Rome, acquainting them with what had happened in Africa, and assuring them, that he had accepted the empire with reluctance, and was ready to resign, if they did not think fit to confirm his election. In the decrees which he sent with his letters, and ordered to be published, with the approbation of the senate, he allowed all exiles to return home, banished the informers, promised large sums to the people, and to the soldiery a greater bounty than any emperor had ever given. At the same time he wrote to all the great men in Rome, most of whom were his particular friends, encouraging them to exert themselves on the present occasion, and join him in rescuing Rome from the insupportable tyranny of Maximinus, which was the only motive that had prompted him, in his old age, to submit to so heavy a burden as the empire. In his letter to Junius Silvanus, then consul, he charged that magistrate to cut off,
without

without delay, Vitalianus, who commanded the body of the prætorian guards that had been left in Rome, and was greatly attached to Maximinus, being of a no less cruel and savage temper than that tyrant. Syllanus, upon the receipt of this letter, sent the quæstor, attended by some resolute men, with letters to Vitalianus, which he pretended to have just received from Maximinus, enjoining them to dispatch him while he was perusing them; an action which they perpetrated accordingly, and then declared, that what they had done was by Maximinus's orders: a pretence which was believed; for thus he used to treat even his best friends.

After this execution, the consul Syllanus assembled at his house the prætors, ædiles, and tribunes of the people; and, attended by them, went to the senate; where he read the letters which Gordianus had written both to them, and to him in particular. The senate, in a transport of joy, declared, without the least hesitation, the two Gordians emperors, the two Maximins public enemies; and offered a great reward to whoever should kill either of them. At the same time they named to the prætorship of the ensuing year a third Gordian, grandson to the elder, though then only twelve years old. These proceedings, however, were kept secret, till the senate had taken the necessary measures for destroying at once the party of the Maximins in Rome; which steps were no sooner taken, than they reported that they were both killed, and that the two Gordians reigned in their room. The edicts of the latter were publicly hung up, and their images carried to the camp, with their letters to the soldiery, who being, after the death of Vitalianus, destitute of a leader, readily submitted to the Gordians. The people, transported with rage against Maximinus hardly to be expressed, immediately ran and pulled down all his statues and monuments, uttering dreadful imprecations against the bloody tyrant and his son. At the same time the senate enacted a decree, condemning all the friends of Maximinus, and the ministers of his cruelty. Such as had not the good fortune to escape, were massacred without mercy by the enraged multitude, dragged through the streets, and thrown into the common sewer. Several innocent persons perished with the guilty, many embracing that opportunity to dispatch their private enemies or creditors. Sabinus, governor of Rome, endeavouring to suppress these disorders, had his brains dashed out with a blow from one of the mob, and his body was left for some time in the public street.

who acknowledge him emperor, and declare Maximinus a public enemy.

The friends of Maximinus at Rome murdered.

γ Gordian. Vit. p. 153, & seq. Max. Vit. p. 143, & seq. Herod. lib. viii. p. 595-598.

*The senate
all to a man
revolt from
Maximi-
nus.*

In the mean time it being publicly known, that Maximinus was still alive, the senate issued a second decree against him, declaring both him and his son public enemies; and at the same time dispatched persons of the greatest interest and authority into all the provinces, with letters to the proconsuls, presidents, lieutenants, and tribunes, exhorting them to join in the common cause, and exert themselves in defence of their common liberties, against a blood-thirsty tyrant, and public enemy. They likewise chose twenty senators, who had all been consuls, and dispersed in different parts of Italy, with orders to guard night and day all the roads, ports, and harbours, that no account of what had passed at Rome might be transmitted to Maximinus before the arrival of Gordian. The letters of the senate were received in most cities and provinces with incredible joy, and a dreadful slaughter was made of the officers and friends of Maximinus. Only a few places continued faithful to him, and either delivered up to the tyrant, or massacred, the deputies of the senate. At Rome persons of all ranks and ages, even the women and children, crowded to the temples, beseeching the gods, that they would never suffer the inhuman tyrant to approach the city ^z.

*His rage
upon the
news of
the revolt.*

Maximinus, who was at this time either in Thrace or Sarmatia, soon received intelligence of what had passed at Rome and in Africa, notwithstanding all the precautions of the senate; even a copy of their decree, declaring him a public enemy, and setting a price upon his head, was transmitted to him; upon the reading of which he flew into such a rage, as can hardly be expressed or conceived: more like a wild beast than a human creature, says the author of his life, he beat his head against the wall, threw himself upon the ground, tore his royal robes, drew his sword, and after having uttered dreadful menaces against the senate, fell upon those who stood next to him. He would have killed his son, had he not avoided his presence, for having refused to quit him, and live at Rome, according to his father's advice, upon their first coming to the empire; for he believed his presence would have kept the senate and people in awe, and prevented this revolt. In short, such was his fury, that his friends considering him as a man bereaved of his understanding, with much difficulty disarmed him, and carried him to his apartment. Being returned to himself, he spent some days in deliberating with his council about the most proper measures to be pursued at such an important conjuncture. Then assembling his

^z Herod. lib. vii. p. 599. Max. Vit. p. 141.

army, he acquainted them with the state of affairs, pretending to be under no apprehension, and promising to distribute among them the estates of the senators and African rebels.

Having concluded his speech, he gave his soldiers a great bounty, and, without loss of time, began his march towards Italy. The troops not shewing so much ardour as he expected, he wrote to his son, who was marching with a separate body at some distance, to join him with all possible expedition, lest the army should, in his absence, attempt his life. At the same time he dispatched persons to Rome, to publish in his name a general pardon with respect to all past injuries, and with them letters to Sabinus, in which was inclosed a copy of the decree, declaring him a public enemy; for he supposed Sabinus, who had absented himself that day from the senate, to be altogether ignorant of what had passed^a. While Maximinus proceeded in his march towards Italy, the face of affairs was quite changed in Africa: a senator, named Capelianus, had been appointed governor of Mauritania by Maximinus, with a considerable body of troops under his command, to make head against the Moors not subject to Rome, who constantly infested the Roman territories. But Gordianus, to whom he had ever been a declared enemy, and whom he had on all occasions opposed, immediately discharged him, and named another in his room. Capelianus, who was an officer of great valour and experience, instead of obeying the orders of the new emperor, assembled all his forces, levied several companies of Moors, and having with incredible dispatch collected a very considerable body of well-disciplined and resolute men, marched at their head to Carthage. His approach alarmed the city: the inhabitants, however, immediately armed themselves, and marched out, under the conduct of Gordianus the younger, to meet the enemy. A bloody engagement ensued, in which Gordianus's raw and undisciplined troops performed wonders; but were in the end routed, and most of them cut in pieces, either in the battle or the pursuit. Gordianus himself was killed in the field; a circumstance which, together with the loss of the battle, and the approach of the enemy, reduced the father to such despair, that he strangled himself with his own girdle^b. Such was the end of the two Gordians (Q), after

He marches for Italy.

Capelianus raises forces against the Gordians.

Their death.

^a Gord. Vit. p. 157, 158. Herod. p. 601. Max. Vit. p. 141.

^b Herod. lib. vii. p. 602, 603. Gord. Vit. p. 158. Max. Vit. p. 145.

(Q) They were sprung from illustrious families in Rome. Gordianus the father was the son of Mæcius

after they had reigned, according to the most probable opinion ^c, one month and six days.

The

^c Vide Petav. Doct. Temp. p. 337.

Mæcius Marullus, descended from the Gracchi, and of Ulpia Gordiana, of the family of the emperor Trajan. His father, grandfather, and great-grandfather, had been consuls; and he himself twice discharged that honourable office, first with the emperor Caracalla in 213, and the second time with Alexander Severus in 229. His wealth was answerable to his quality; for he possessed, according to Julius Capitolinus, more land in the provinces than any private man in Rome (1). He was highly esteemed by the emperor Alexander, who returned public thanks to the senate for preferring so deserving a person to the government of Africa, styling him, in the letter which he wrote on that occasion, a nobleman of great magnanimity, eloquence, justice, moderation, integrity, and goodness. He was well versed in all the branches of literature, especially in poetry; and wrote in his youth several poems, which were greatly esteemed, and, among the rest, one intitled Antoniniades, describing, in thirty books, the lives and wars, the public and private actions, of Antoninus Pius, and Marcus Aurelius, or Antoninus Philosophus. He wrote likewise in prose the praises of the Antonini. After his second consulship, he was immediately sent into Africa in quality of proconsul; which office he discharged with such justice, equi-

ty, and moderation, that he was universally adored, and more beloved by the people, than any governor had ever been before him; some calling him a Scipio, some a Cato, some a Mutius Scævola, a Rutilius, a Lælius. He married Fabia Orestilla, the daughter of Annianus Severus, and grand-daughter of the emperor M. Aurelius; and had by her a daughter named Mæcia Faustina, who was married to Junius Balbus, a consular; and a son, styled in the ancient inscriptions and medals M. Antonius Gordianus (2), with the title of Pontifex; whereas his father is distinguished with that of Pontifex Maximus. The son had an extraordinary memory, and was well versed in polite literature, having had Serenus Sammonicus for his preceptor, who bequeathed him his famous library, consisting of sixty-two thousand volumes. He wrote several pieces both in prose and verse. He was well skilled in the law, and one of Alexander's chief counsellors. He was universally respected on account of his obliging carriage, and extraordinary sweet temper; but loved his pleasures, and spent most of his time in baths, gardens, and groves. He kept constantly twenty-two concubines, and is said to have had by each of them three or four children; whence he was called the Priamus, and satirically the Priapus, of his time. He was

(1) Gord. Vit. p. 151, 152.

(2) Goltz, p. 192.

highly

This news of their death threw the whole city into the utmost consternation. However, as the Romans dreaded above all things the cruel effects of Maximinus's resentment, and expected to find no mercy at the hands of so barbarous a tyrant, they resolved not to submit, but to defend themselves to the last. The senate, therefore, assembling in the temple of Concord, chose two new emperors, M. Clodius Pupienus Maximus and Decimus Cœlius Balbinus. The former was a person of low birth, but extraordinary merit: his father was, according to some, a cartwright; according to others, a locksmith; but the son raised himself, chiefly by his courage and valour, to the first employments in the empire. He served first in quality of a private foldier; but was soon preferred to the rank of a centurion, then to that of a tribune, and not long after to the command of several legions, in which he acquitted himself with such reputation, that he was admitted into the senate, created prætor, honoured with the consulship, and successively appointed governor of Bithynia, Greece, and Narbonne Gaul. From Gaul he was sent to command the troops in Illyricum, where he gained great advantages over the Sarmatians and Germans. Upon his return from that country, he was made governor of Rome, in which place he acquitted himself with such prudence, integrity, and discretion, that he was both esteemed and beloved by persons of every rank and condition. He appeared always grave and sedate, and shewed no great complaisance to any one; he was just, merciful, and never guilty of the least action that favoured of inhumanity, but, on the contrary, always ready to forgive. He adhered to no party, was steady and inflexible in his resolutions, and, without trusting to others, examined every thing himself with great care and attention. In short, the senate entertained such a high opinion of his extraordinary merit and virtues, that, in declaring him emperor, they solemnly protested, that, in the

Pupienus and Balbinus proclaimed perors. The rise and preferments of Pupienus.

highly favoured by Heliogabalus, as a young man addicted to pleasures, and by that prince raised to the quæstorship. Alexander preferred him, as he was a man of known integrity and great abilities, to the prætorship, and soon after honoured him with the consular dig-

nity. In the reign of Alexander, or Maximinus, he was sent into Africa, in quality of lieutenant to his father, who took him for his partner in the empire, and, upon his death, put an end to his own life in the manner we have related above (3).

(3) Vit. Gordian.

whole

The extraction and employments of Balbinus.

whole empire, they knew no person better qualified than he for sustaining the name and dignity of a prince^d.

Balbinus was descended of an illustrious family, and pretended to derive his pedigree from Cornelius Balbus Theophanes, a celebrated historian, and a man of the first rank in the island of Lesbos, who was made free of Rome by Pompey the Great. The present emperor had been twice consul, and had governed with reputation several provinces; namely, Asia, Africa, Bithynia, Galatia, Pontus, Thrace, and Gaul. He had likewise commanded armies; but, being in some degree timorous, he was thought better qualified for civil than military affairs. He possessed immense wealth, lived with great splendor, was addicted to pleasures, but at the same time universally beloved for his integrity, his humanity, mild temper, and obliging behaviour. He was an excellent orator, no mean poet, and had an uncommon talent in making extemporary verses^e.

The people mutiny.

Maximus and Balbinus being, with the unanimous consent of the senate, raised to the sovereignty, and vested with the tribunitial and proconsular power, proceeded, at the breaking up of the assembly, to the Capitol. But while they were offering the usual sacrifices, the populace rose, and, armed with stones and clubs, declared that they would not obey the new emperors; and demanded, with great clamour, a prince of the Gordian family. Maximus and Balbinus, supported by some young knights, attempted to cut a way through the croud, sword in hand; but were, notwithstanding all their efforts, obliged to send for young Gordian, then only twelve years old, who was received by the populace with loud shouts of joy, and carried to the Capitol. There the senate, to appease the multitude, declared him Cæsar, arrayed him with the habit peculiar to that dignity, and in that attire shewed him to the people, who now dispersed, and, retiring quietly to their houses, suffered the new emperors to take possession of the palace^f, where they began to discharge the functions of the sovereignty with deifying the two Gordians. When that ceremony was over, they appointed Sabinus governor of Rome, and Pinarius Valens, uncle by the father to Maximus, commander of the prætorian guards. Then, without loss of time, they began to levy forces, and make the necessary preparations for taking the field against Maximinus, who, upon the news of their election, quickened his march, breathing nothing but ruin and destruction.

Young Gordian declared Cæsar.

^d Max. & Balb. Vit. p. 166, 167.

^e Idem. ibid. p. 168, & seq.

Herod. lib. vii. p. 604.

^f Max. & Balb. Vit. p. 145.

As most of the provinces had espoused the party of the senate, troops were sent from all parts to reinforce the army of Maximus, who, being charged with the conduct of the war, as the more able commander, left Rome soon after his election, leaving the prætorian guards, and part of the new-raised forces, to defend the city, and awe the populace. After his departure, the senate dispatched the most considerable men of their body into the different parts of Italy, with orders to fortify all the cities, and supply the inhabitants with arms; to remove all the provisions into the fortified towns, and either to reap or destroy the corn in the fields, to mow the grass, and lay waste the whole country through which Maximinus was to march with his numerous army. At the same time, they sent circular letters into all the provinces, declaring such as should lend him the least assistance, traitors, rebels, and public enemies. Maximus had scarce departed, when dreadful disturbances arose in the city, occasioned by the temerity of two senators, Gallicanus and Mæcenas, who, seeing two soldiers of the prætorian guards enter the hall, where the senate was assembled, quitting their places, rushed upon them unexpectedly, and dispatched them with their daggers; for, in those distracted times, most senators wore daggers under their robes. The other soldiers of that corps, who were waiting at the door with the populace, immediately fled; but were pursued by Gallicanus, who encouraged the mob to fall upon them as spies and partisans of the tyrant Maximinus. Some of them were wounded, but the rest fortified themselves in their camp, where they were attacked the same day by Gallicanus at the head of the multitude; (whom he had supplied with arms), and of all the gladiators he could assemble. The guards sustained the attack with their usual resolution, repulsed the assailants, and, falling upon them in their retreat, cut great numbers of them in pieces. This slaughter served only to inspire the multitude with new rage; and the senate, espousing their quarrel, ordered the new-levied forces, which Maximus had left to maintain peace and tranquility in the city, to march against the prætorian guards. They accordingly attacked them with great fury; but were, after repeated assaults, in which great numbers perished, obliged to give over the attempt, and retire. The incensed multitude, finding all their efforts thus baffled, determined at last to cut the conduits that conveyed water into the camp; a step which reduced the soldiery to such despair, that they rushed unexpectedly upon the multitude, sword in hand, and drove them, after a long dispute, in which much blood was shed

Maximus marches against Maximinus.

Dreadful disturbances in Rome.

A battle between the prætorian guards, and the people.

on

on both sides, into the city, where the combat began again, the people discharging from the tops of their houses showers of stones and tiles upon the soldiery, who, in revenge, set fire to their shops and storehouses; which consumed the greatest part of the city, an incredible quantity of valuable effects, and many persons of all ranks ^z (R).

*Maximinus
pursues his
march into
Italy.*

Next year, when Annius Pius, or, as others call him, Ulpian, and Pontianus, were consuls, Maximinus, early in the spring, pursued his march towards Italy, having with him almost all the forces of the empire. Being arrived at the foot of the Alps, that part Italy from Illyricum, he found the city of Hemona or Æmona abandoned by its inhabitants; a circumstance which inspired him with hopes of certain victory; for he thence concluded, that no place or city would dare to resist him. Maximinus, leaving Æmona, passed the mountains without meeting with the least opposition. His men, who expected to be refreshed, after passing the mountains, with plenty of provisions in Italy, finding the country laid waste far and wide, and themselves destitute even of necessaries, began to mutiny.

*His soldiers
begin to
mutiny.*

Maximinus punished the ringleaders of the tumult with great severity, which only served to exasperate the rest. However, he pursued his march; and being informed that the city of Aquileia had shut its gates against a party, which he had sent to take possession of the place, he marched thither in person with all his forces, not doubting but the inhabitants would submit upon the approach of so formidable an army. But Crispinus and Menophilus, two consulars of great resolution and intrepidity, to whom the senate had committed the defence of the city, answered the tribune sent by Maximinus to summon them to surrender, that they were determined to defend the place to the last extremity, and rather forfeit their lives than betray their trust, or yield to such a cruel, bloody, and faithless tyrant. At the same time, to animate the inhabitants, who began to waver, they proclaimed that Apollo, the tutelar god of the place, had assured them of victory; which assurance dispelled all

*Maximinus
summons
the city of
Aquileia to
surrender.*

^z Herod. lib. vii. p. 667, 608.

(R) Herodian does not inform us how the tumult ended; but Capitolinus writes, that the emperor Balbinus, attempting to appease the tumult, was dangerously wounded on the head; but at length, having shewn

young Gordian to the people in his purple robes, the fury of both parties abated at once, hostilities ceased, the people retired to their houses, and the soldiers to the camp.

fear,

fear, so that every one began to prepare for a vigorous defence.

Mean while, Maximinus, having spent some time in passing the river Sontius, now Isonzo, about sixteen miles from Aquileia, approached the city; and having caused all the vines and neighbouring groves to be cut down, he began to batter the walls with an incredible number of warlike engines, and to harass the besieged with repeated assaults; which they sustained with amazing resolution and intrepidity. Even the women and children appeared on the ramparts, and bore their share in the common danger; the women especially signalized their zeal, by allowing their hair to be employed in making strings for the bows, and other warlike machines. The senate, out of gratitude, after the death of Maximinus, caused a magnificent temple to be erected, which they consecrated to Venus Calva, or Venus the Bald^b. The soldiers of Maximinus, in the beginning of the siege, acted with great ardour; which, however, began to abate, when they found the inhabitants firmly determined to undergo all difficulties and hardships, rather than submit. Maximinus, highly provoked at their backwardness, and besides enraged at the bitter reproaches uttered by the inhabitants against him and his son, as often as they approached the walls, caused several of his officers to be publicly executed. This barbarity exasperated the soldiers, already inclined to mutiny for want of provisions, of which, and even of water, there was great scarcity in the camp. Besides, a report was spread, that the whole empire was arming against Maximinus, and ready to fall upon those who supported him in his tyranny. At length the Albanians, that is, the soldiers belonging to the camp in the neighbourhood of Alba, took a sudden resolution to dispatch the author of so many calamities; and without farther deliberation, hurried at noon-day to the tent of Maximinus, dispatched both him and his son with many wounds, cut off their heads, and sent them to Rome, and threw their bodies into the river. With them were killed Anolinus, captain of the guards, and all their ministers and friends^c. Such was the end of the reign, or rather of the tyranny, of the two Maximins, after it had lasted three years and a few days, the father being in the fifty-fifth year of his age, and the son in the twenty-first. The Pannonians, Thracians, and some other troops, heard the news of their death with regret; but did not attempt to revenge

Yr. of Fl.
2586.
A. D. 238.
U. C. 986.

*The soldiers
of Maximinus
mutiny,
and murder
him and
his son.*

^b Vide de Meneffrier Medailles des Emper. & Imperator. p. 149.
^c Dijon, 1642. ^d Herod. lib. viii. p. 614, & seq.

it. Thus the whole army presented themselves unarmed before the gates of Aquileia, acquainted the besieged with the death of Maximinus, and desired to be admitted into the city. It was not thought prudent to open the gates; but after they had adored the images of Maximus, Balbinus, and Gordian, placed for that purpose on the ramparts, a great quantity of provisions was sent to their camp; for they were almost famished: and next day they took the usual oaths to Maximus and Balbinus ^k.

*His death
occasions
great joy
at Rome.*

An express was immediately dispatched to Rome with these joyful tidings, who, passing through Ravenna, found the emperor Maximus busy in assembling his forces, in order to march against the tyrant. But when he understood that both the Maximins were killed, that their army had submitted, and sworn fidelity to him and his colleague, transported with joy, and laying aside all military preparations, he repaired to the temples to return thanks to the gods for such signal and unexpected success. In the mean time the express pursuing his journey, and often changing horses, reached Rome the fourth day, distant from Aquileia about two hundred and eighty miles. Upon his arrival he found Balbinus and Gordian assisting with the people at the public sports in the theatre, where he delivered his letters to the two princes. Immediately the whole multitude exclaimed with one voice, "Maximinus is killed;" and, rising up, left the theatre, and crowded to the temples, whither Balbinus and Gordian followed. The senate immediately assembled; and after decreeing several honours to the three princes, appointed sacrifices to be offered in all the temples, and a day of public and solemn thanksgiving for their happy delivery. Balbinus, who used to tremble at the very name of Maximinus, offered a hecatomb; which was never done but upon some very extraordinary occasion, and caused the same sacrifice to be made in all the cities of the empire ^l. Those who brought the heads of the two Maximins, arrived at Rome soon after the courier. They were met every where by crowds of people, and received with the greatest demonstrations of joy. They entered Rome with the heads stuck upon two lances, that every one might behold them; and no sight was ever more pleasing. The people repaired again to the temples, offered fresh sacrifices, and seemed no less transported with joy, than if they had been delivered from imminent death or captivity. The two heads were abandoned to the rage of the populace, and, after many insults, burnt in the field of

^k Max. Vit. p. 146.

^l Max. Vit. p. 169, &c.

Mars. The names of the Maximins were, by a decree of the senate, erased out of all inscriptions, their statues overturned, and their bodies ordered to be left unburied. The emperor Maximus hastened from Ravenna to Aquileia, where he was received with loud acclamations, and acknowledged emperor by the army of Maximinus; among whom he distributed large sums, and then sent back to their respective quarters, retaining with him only the prætorian guards, and a small body of Germans, in whom he chiefly confided. During his stay at Aquileia, the senate, to do him honour, sent a deputation, consisting of twenty of their body, who had been all consuls, prætors, or quæstors.

With them he departed from Aquileia; and arriving at Rome with a numerous and splendid retinue, was received at the gates by Balbinus, Gordian, the senate in a body, with all the people, and conducted in triumph to the palace^a.

Maximus returns to Rome.

The two emperors governed with great prudence and moderation, enacted excellent laws, administered justice with the utmost impartiality, maintained the military discipline with due rigour, paid great respect and deference to the senate, and conducted themselves in all affairs with such wisdom, equity, and moderation, that they were in a manner adored by the senate and people^a. But the happiness and tranquility, which they enjoyed under these excellent princes, were of short duration. The Carpi, a people beyond the Danube, passing that river, ravaged the province of Mœsia; the Goths, provoked perhaps by the death of Maximinus, invaded the Roman territories on the side of Scythia; and the Persians, who had continued quiet since the year 233, when Alexander made war upon them, threatened the Eastern provinces. It was therefore agreed among the princes, that Maximus should march against the Persians, Balbinus against the Goths and the Carpi, and Gordian remain in the mean time at Rome.

The wife administers of the two emperors.

But while great preparations were making for the intended expeditions, the prætorian guards, dissatisfied to see princes, who had been created by the senate, so much applauded, and provoked at the bitter invectives which were daily uttered against Maximinus, and reflected no small dishonour upon them, who had raised him to the empire, began to mutiny, and complain, that the right of naming the emperors, which had hitherto proved so advantageous to them, was taken out of their hands, and transferred to

The prætorian guards mutiny.

^a Herodian, lib. viii, p. 680.
167, 171.

^a Maxim. & Balb. Vit. p.

the senate. Besides, they grew jealous of the Germans, whom Maximus had brought to Rome with a design, as they imagined, to discharge the prætorian guards, as Septimius Severus had formerly done, and to take the Germans in their room. Being thus prejudiced against the emperors, they resolved to dispatch them and resume their pretended authority, by electing another sovereign. Having taken this resolution, they only waited for an opportunity of putting it in execution, which soon offered; for the Capitoline games being celebrated a few days after, and most of the emperors guards and domestics resorting thither, the discontented and mutinous soldiery marched immediately to the palace, where the two princes were left almost alone. Maximus, informed of their arrival before they had entered the palace, proposed to call the Germans to his assistance, but was opposed by Balbinus. For these two princes were not, though possessed of great qualities, free from private jealousies. Balbinus was piqued at the extraordinary honours which the senate had conferred upon his colleague, as if the death of Maximinus, and blessings thence accruing, had been chiefly owing to him; and besides, looked upon him as one greatly inferior to himself in birth and nobility. On the other hand, Maximus knowing himself to be the better soldier, and abler commander, tacitly claimed on that account the chief authority. These mutual jealousies, though prudently concealed, and rather guessed at by others than seen, bred some misunderstanding between them, and finally occasioned the ruin of both. For Balbinus, not giving credit to what he was told of the designs of the prætorian guards, but rather suspecting that his colleague intended to employ the Germans against him, would not suffer Maximus, to whom they were greatly attached, to send for them. This dispute gave time to the prætorian guards to break into the palace, and disperse such of the emperor's friends and domestics as offered to oppose them. When they came to the apartment where the two princes were, they rushed upon them with inexpressible fury, tore in pieces their imperial robes, dragged them out of the palace, with a design to carry them to their camp, wounded and insulted them in a most outrageous manner. But while they were hurrying them through the city, being informed that the Germans had taken arms, and were advancing to rescue the princes, they killed them both, and leaving their bodies in the street, retired to the camp, carrying with them young Gordian, whom they proclaimed emperor, giving out, to appease the populace, that they had killed those whom the people

*Jealousies
between
the emperors.*

*They are
both killed.
Gordian
proclaimed
emperor.*

people had at first rejected, and elevated the person whom they had demanded. The Germans, informed that the emperors were killed, retired, without committing any hostilities, to their quarters without the city. Thus Gordian remained in peaceable possession of the empire. Maximus and Balbinus had reigned about one year and two months.

Of the descent and birth of Gordian we have spoken above. He was, according to Herodian, the son of Junius Balbus, by the sister of Gordian the younger, from whom he borrowed the name of M. Antonius Gordianus; as he is styled in all the ancient inscriptions. He was about thirteen years old when he came to the empire, and consequently must have been born in the year 225, the fourth of Alexander's reign. He was a youth of a gay temper, comely aspect, and exceeding mild disposition; which gained him the affection of all who approached him. Capitolinus tells us, that he was beloved by persons of all ranks more than any prince had ever been before him. The senate used to style him their son, the soldiers their child, and the people their darling. He was addicted to study, and well instructed in most branches of polite literature. He had all the necessary qualifications for forming an excellent prince; but, as he wanted experience, and such a mother to direct and advise him as Mamaea, in the beginning of his reign he fell into the hands of Maurus, and some other crafty freedmen and eunuchs, who, abusing the confidence he reposed in them, persuaded him to do many things which he ever after regretted. They soon drove all good men from the court, raised to the first employments persons altogether unworthy of them, plundered the treasury, and did all the mischief which wicked and avaricious ministers are capable of doing. In the beginning of the year the young prince entered upon his first consulship, to which he had been named in the reign of Maximus and Balbinus, and took for his colleague Aviola. He now entertained the people with magnificent sports, in order to make them forget their past heats and animosities.

His excellent qualifications.

Is deceived and imposed upon by the ministers.

In the following year, when Sabinus was consul the second time with Venuustus, Sabinianus revolted in Africa; and caused himself to be proclaimed emperor; but the governor of Mauritania reduced the rebels to such a desperate situation, that they delivered up Sabinianus, acknowledged their fault, and submitted. All the partisans of Sa-

Sabinianus revolts, but is defeated.

* Herod. p. 621. Max. Balb. Vit. p. 170.
p. 621. Gord. Vit. p. 160—164.

† Herod. lib. viii.

*Mistheus
captain of
the guards,
and father-
in-law to
the emper-
or.*

binianus were pardoned, but what was his fate we are not informed. Next year the emperor took upon him his second consulship, having Pompeianus Civica for his colleague. The young prince married Furia Sabina Tranquillina, the daughter of Mistheus, who was immediately honoured with the title of Augusta; but whether he had any children by her history does not relate. He chose Mistheus for his father-in-law, purely on account of his wisdom, integrity, and learning; and appointed him captain of the guards, that he might have a person of his extraordinary talents with whom to advise, not caring to trust to his own judgment. Mistheus had no sooner taken possession of that important employment, than he acquainted the emperor with the misconduct of Maurus, and base practices of the other freedmen and eunuchs; who were all discharged, and banished the court. He respected Mistheus as his father, gave him that title, ordered him to call him his son, and returned thanks to the senate for distinguishing his father-in-law with the titles of Father of Princes and Guardian of the Republic; titles which he well deserved, being one of the few ministers who are said to have had nothing in view but the glory of their prince, and the welfare of the state. In the course of this year a dreadful earthquake ruined a great many cities, and destroyed an infinite number of people^r.

*Sapor, king
of Persia,
over-runs
the Roman
dominions
in the East.*

When C. Vettius Aufidius Atticus and C. Asinius Prætextatus were consuls, Rome was alarmed with insurrections in the East, where the Persians, under the conduct of Sapor, son and successor to Artaxerxes, the restorer of the Persian monarchy, had entered the Roman dominions at the head of a formidable army, reduced all Mesopotamia, with the cities of Nisibis and Carrhæ; and committed most dreadful ravages in Syria. He had even made himself master of Antioch, and threatened to over-run the other provinces, most of the Romans who defended them having lifted themselves in his army. Gordian resolved to march in person against so formidable an enemy. Having therefore caused the temple of Janus to be opened, according to the ancient custom, which had been long omitted, and perhaps was never after practised, he set out for Rome this year 242, the fourth of his reign, with a numerous and well-disciplined army. Taking his route through Mœsia, he defeated, in that province, the Goths and Sarmatians, who disputed his passage, and obliged them to abandon their conquests, and return to their respective countries. How-

^r Gord. Vit. p. 161, 162, 163.

ever, he was worsted by the Alani in the celebrated plains of Philippi in Macedon, or, as others will have it, of Philippopolis in Thrace¹. But the Barbarians neglected to improve their victory, and retired. Gordian pursued his march unmolested through Thrace, and, passing the Hellespont, arrived safe in Asia.

From the Hellespont he marched through Asia into Syria, where he gained signal advantages over the enemy, of which historians give us but a confused account. However, they all agree, that he overcame the Persians in several battles; that he recovered the cities of Nisibis and Carrhæ; and obliged Sapor, with his powerful and numerous army, to abandon the Roman dominions, and retire with shame and disgrace into his own country, whither he pursued him as far as Ctesiphon². He wrote to the senate upon his arrival at Nisibis in Mesopotamia, informing them of the advantages he had gained over the Barbarians in Macedon and Thrace: proceeding to enumerate his victories over the Persians, he tells the fathers, that he had delivered the Antiochians from the Persian yoke, recovered Carrhæ, and other cities, and was arrived at Nisibis, whence he designed to proceed to Ctesiphon, "provided the Gods, adds he, continue their protection to us, and preserve Mithreus, my father and captain of the guards, by whose wise conduct we have achieved these, and hope to accomplish still greater things. It is incumbent upon you, conscript fathers, to appoint public processions, to recommend us to the gods, and to return thanks to Mithreus." Upon the receipt of this letter the senate decreed a triumph to the emperor, and a triumphal chariot to Mithreus, with a pompous inscription, styling him the Father of Princes, Captain of the Guards, and the Guardian of the Republic³. This inscription, which was placed on the basis of his triumphal statue, is still to be seen at Rome almost entire.

But the happiness which the whole empire enjoyed under the government of Gordian, and the wise administration of Mithreus, was of short duration. The latter died in the following year, during the consulship of Arrianus and Papus, and by his last will left the Roman people his heirs. Upon his death, Philip was appointed captain of the guards, and commander in chief, under the emperor, of all the forces in the East⁴. Next year, when Peregri- nus and Æmilianus were consuls, the emperor entered the Persian dominions, in order to prosecute the war which he

Yr. of Fl.
2590.
A. D. 242.
U. C. 990.

*He is de-
feated by
Gordian,
and obliged
to retire.*

*Gordian is
decreed a
triumph,
and Mith-
reus a tri-
umphal
statue.*

*Mithreus
dies.*

¹ Gord. Vit. p. 163, 164.
Vit. p. 160.

² Aur. Vict. Eutrop.
³ Zos. lib. 1. p. 641.

⁴ Gord.

had so successfully begun. Plotinus, the celebrated philosopher, lifted himself in his army, hoping by these means to have an opportunity of conferring with the Persian and Indian philosophers^x.

Julius Philippus captain of the guards in his room.

Philip no sooner saw himself raised to the important post of captain of the guards, than he began to aspire to the sovereignty itself. As the soldiers were greatly attached to the young prince, in order to lessen their affection to him, he sometimes marched them into places where no provisions could be obtained; at other times sent the vessels which attended the army, loaded with corn, another way; hoping that the troops, distressed for want of supplies, would, notwithstanding their attachment to Gordian, begin to mutiny; nor was he mistaken in his conjecture, the most turbulent among them, whom Philip had gained, whispering, that Gordian, a youth only nineteen years old, was not fit to command such powerful forces; that they wanted such a general as Philip, whom long experience had taught how to govern an empire, how to command an army^y. Gordian, however, advanced against Sapor, and, meeting him in Mesopotamia, totally defeated on the banks of the Aboras, or Aburas, and obliged him to take shelter in the heart of his own dominions^z.

He induces the soldiers to mutiny.

But while the young conqueror was pursuing the advantages of his victory, Philip, who had already corrupted the chief officers of the army, led the troops through barren and desert countries, where, through failure of provisions, which they ascribed to want of experience in Gordian, they openly mutinied, and demanded, that Philip might reign in conjunction with Gordian, as his guardian and governor. The virtuous young emperor, unwilling to shed Roman blood, granted them their request; and took Philip for his partner in the empire; who, seeing himself upon a level with his sovereign, soon began to usurp an authority over him, and to dispose of all employments, as if he had been sole emperor. This presumption Gordian could not bear, and therefore attempted to depose him; but Philip's party prevailing, he was himself deposed, and murdered by the usurper. His death happened about the beginning of March^a, after he had lived nineteen years, and reigned five years and eight months. He was killed on the farthest borders of Persia, in the place where his tomb was to be seen in the year 363, beyond the Euphrates and the Abo-

Yr. of Fl.
259.
A. D. 244.
U. C. 992.

Gordian deposed, and slain.

^x Porphyry. Vit. Plot. p. 2. ^y Gord. Vit. p. 163. Zof. lib. i. p. 641. ^z Ammian, lib. xxiii. ^a Cod. Jus. lib. ix. tit. 2, leg. 7, p. 813, &c.

ras, between the cities of Cereufa, which stood near the conflux of those rivers, and Dura, situated very near the latter, about twenty miles distance from the former river. The place was called Zantha or Zaithe ^b. The soldiers erected a stately tomb to the memory of the deceased emperor, with the following epitaph in the Greek, Latin, Persian, Hebrew, and Egyptian tongues, that it might be read by all nations: "To the deified Gordian, who conquered the Persians, Goths, and Sarmatians; suppressed the civil discords, subdued the Germans; but could not overcome the Philips." The last words allude, according to Capitolinus, to his having been overcome by the Alani in the plains of Philippi, and his being killed by Philip ^c. But we cannot be persuaded that this epitaph was put up during the life, and reign of the emperor Philip. All those who had imbrued their hands in the blood of this excellent prince, perished soon after. Capitolinus writes, that they dispatched themselves with the same swords which they had employed against him (S).

*His tomb
and epitaph.*

^b Ammian, lib. xxiii. p. 244—246. Zof. lib. iii. p. 716. Noris, Epist. p. 287. ^c Gord. Vit. p. 165.

(S) The writers who flourished under Gordian were; Censorinus, who wrote, or rather finished, his famous book, intitled, De die Natali, in the first year of that prince's reign, Herodian, who wrote, in eight books, the history of the emperors, from the death of M. Aurelius to that of Maximus and Balbinus. Under Gordian likewise flourished Arrian, a Greek historian, quoted by Capitolinus in his history of the reigns of Maximinus and Gordian (1), and Aelius Julius Gordus, often quoted by the Augustine historians (2). He wrote the lives of the emperors, from Trajan to the two Gordians; but filled his history, according to Capitolinus, with many impertinent and trifling accounts. Aelius Sabinus wrote the life of

Maximinus; Vulcanius Terentianus was author of the lives of the three Gordians, in whose times they lived, and Curius Fortunatianus wrote the history of the reign of the two Maximins. Some pretend, that the history of Fortunatianus is still extant, and lodged in the emperor's library; nay, that it was formerly printed in Italy. In the reign of the emperor Constantine were still extant some books of epigrams by Fabillus, a Greek grammarian, and one of the preceptors of Maximinus the younger, and various poems written by Toxotius, a senator of the family of Antoninus Pius. He married Junia Fadilla, formerly betrothed to young Maximinus, and died soon after he had discharged the office of prætor (3).

- (1) Voss. Hist. Græc. lib. iv. p. 17. Maximin. Vit. p. 150.
(2) Voss. Hist. Lat. lib. ii. cap. 3, p. 179. Macrin. Vit. p. 93.
(3) Voss. Hist. Lat. lib. ii. cap. 3.

Philip

*Birth and
extraction
of Philip.*

Philip was born in Bosra, a city of Arabia Petraea, of a very mean descent; for his father is said to have been a famous captain of banditti in that country ^d. In the ancient inscriptions he is styled M. Julius Philippus, and his wife Marcia Otacilla Severa. He had a son, named likewise Philip, born in the year 237, consequently seven years old when his father seized the empire. The emperor himself was at that time, according to the chronicle of Alexandria ^e, about forty; but Aurelius Victor supposes him to have been much older (T). He no sooner saw himself invested with the sovereign power, than he declared his son Cæsar, and though but seven years old, shared the empire with him. He then wrote to the senate, acquainting them with the death of Gordian, which he falsely ascribed to a natural distemper, and with his own election ^f. Philip, desirous to return to Rome, immediately concluded a peace with the Persians, and led back his army into Syria. He arrived at Antioch before Easter, which, according to Eusebius ^g, was celebrated this year on the fourteenth of April; and from thence departed for Rome, where he was received with the usual demonstrations of joy by the senate and people; whose affections, though they at first seemed averse to him, he soon gained, by his mild administration, and conciliating behaviour ^h. He appointed his brother Priscus commander in chief of the troops in Syria, and Severianus, his father-in-law, general of the forces in Moesia and Macedonia, persons ill qualified for those important posts ⁱ.

*He concludes a
peace with
the Persians.*

In the following year the emperor entered upon his first consulship, having Titianus for his colleague; and soon after, leaving the city, marched against the Carpi, who, passing the Danube, had invaded Moesia, and plundered great part of that province. The emperor defeated them in two battles, and obliged them to repass the Danube, and

*Defeats the
Carpi.*

^d Gord. Vit. p. 163.
Alexand. p. 630.
lib. vi. cap. 34.
p. 642, 643.

Zonar. p. 229. Vict. Epit.

^f Gordian. Vit. p. 164.

^h Aur. Vict. Zof. lib. i. p. 646.

^e Chron.

^g Euseb.

ⁱ Ibid.

(T) Whether or not Philip was the first Christian emperor, has been the subject of great disputes among the learned. The affirmative seems to us by far the most probable, being maintained by the following writers; namely, Jerom, Chrysostom, Dionysius of Alexan-

dria, Zonaras, Nicephorus, Cedrenus, Rufinus, the chronicle of Alexandria, Syncellus, Orosius, Jornandes, the anonymous writer published by Valesius, with Ammianus Marcellinus, the learned cardinal Bona, Abulfaragius, Vincentius, Lirinensis, and Huetius.

sue for peace; which he readily granted, and returned to Rome. Next year, when Præfens and Albinus were consuls, nothing happened at Rome, or in the provinces, which historians have thought worth transmitting to posterity, except the destruction of the theatre of Pompey, by fire, and another stately building called Centum Columnæ, or the Hundred Pillars. In the beginning of the following year the emperor entered upon his second consulship, with his son, whom he honoured with the title of Augustus, and vested with the tribunitial power ^k. Both princes retained the fasces all this and the following year, to celebrate with the greater pomp and magnificence the thousandth year of Rome, begun on the twenty-first of April of the year 247, of the Christian æra, and fifth of Philip's reign, according to the computation of Varro, which was then followed by most historians and chronologers. Extraordinary rejoicings were made in the city, shews of all kinds exhibited for ten days together, and an incredible number of wild beasts, reserved by Gordian for his triumph over the Persians, killed, and distributed among the people ^l. This year the emperor published an edict, forbidding, under the severest penalties, all manner of unnatural lust, and those infamous practices which had long prevailed in Rome, being countenanced by the wicked, and tolerated by the good princes ^m. When M. Æmilianus was the second time consul with Julius Aquilinus, the Eastern provinces, no longer able to pay the taxes with which they were oppressed, nor endure the haughty conduct of Priscus, their governor, openly revolted, and proclaimed Papianus, or Jotopianus, emperor; but he was soon killed, and his death put an end to the disturbances on that side ⁿ. At the same time the provinces of Mœsia and Pannonia rebelled, and elected P. Carvilius Marinus, who was but a centurion. In consequence of this revolt, Philip, in great consternation, intreated the senate either to enable him to quash the rebellion, or to depose him, if they were dissatisfied with his conduct. This unexpected speech surpris'd the senate; but Decius, while the other senators continued silent, addressing the emperor, told him, that he had no reason to fear Marinus, whose presumption, as he was unequal to any great undertaking, would soon prove his ruin.

What Decius had foretold, happened a few days after, when Marinus was killed by those very persons who had

The thousandth year of Rome.

Unnatural lust suppressed at Rome.

Several rebellions.

^k Onuph. p. 260. Goltz. p. 807. ^l Pagi, p. 247. Spanh. lib. iii. p. 147. ^m Alex. Vit. p. 121. Aur. Vict. ⁿ Zof. lib. i. p. 642.

Decius declared emperor by the troops in Illyricum.

*Yr. of Fl.
2597.
A. D. 249.
U. C. 997.*

*Philip
was slain
and killed.*

raised him to the empire. Philip then retalling his father-in-law Severianus, obliged Decius, much against his inclination, to accept of the government of Mœsia and Pannonia. He no sooner appeared there, than the soldiers proclaimed him emperor, and forced him to accept the sovereignty, threatening him with death, if he declined the offer. Fear, therefore, getting the better of his fidelity, he suffered himself to be arrayed with the imperial purple, and the soldiers to swear allegiance to him. Zonaras tells us, that he immediately wrote to Philip, assuring him, that he would resign the sovereignty as soon as he reached Rome. But Philip, without relying upon such promises, marched with the greatest expedition against the usurper, hoping to surprize him. His son he left at Rome, with a detachment of the prætorian guards, to over-awe the city. Decius, having timely notice of his march and approach, received him with his troops in order of battle. An action ensued, in which great numbers of Philip's troops were cut in pieces; and the rest obliged to retire to Verona, where he himself was killed by the army. The news of his death no sooner reached Rome, than the prætorian guards dispatched his son, who was then in their camp. Such was the end of the emperor Philip, after he had reigned five years; and some months. Both he and his son were, according to Eutropius, ranked among the gods; a circumstance which shews, that his administration was not displeasing to the senate, though he had succeeded Gordian, a prince so much and so universally beloved (U).

Upon the death of Philip and his son, Decius was acknowledged emperor, first by the soldiery, and soon after by the senate and people, who wanted both strength and courage to dispute the election of the new prince. He was a

* Zonar. p. 229. * Cod. Just. lib. ix. tit. 32. leg. 6. p. 489.
& lib. viii. tit. 56. leg. 1. p. 804, &c.

(U) Eusebius and Dionysius of Alexandria, who was raised to that see in his reign, tell us, that under him the Christian religion was publicly preached; that it flourished and encreased more than it had done under any other prince (1). Of Philip, the son, authors observe, that he was of such a grave, or

rather melancholy temper, that no one could, by any contrivance, ever make him laugh or smile. Both he and his mother Marcia Otacilia Severa professed, according to St. Jerome (2), and the chronicle of Alexandria (3), the Christian religion.

(1) Euseb. lib. vi. cap. 30. 232.
Alexand. p. 639.

(2) Hier. Chron. (3) Chron.

native

native of Buhalia, or Budalia, a town in the territory of Sirmium, in Lower Pannonia, and, according to the chronicle of Alexandria^q, raised to the empire in the fifty-seventh, but according to Victor the younger, only in the forty-seventh year of his age. He had by his wife Herennia Etruscilla, four sons, namely, Decius, Hostilianus, Etruscus, and Trajan. The name of Messius was common to them all; whence we may conclude, that it was the name of the family. The emperor is styled, in the ancient inscriptions, Caius Messius Quintus Trajanus Decius. He was, according to Zosimus his panegyrist, descended of an illustrious family, and endowed with every good quality^r. Victor the younger styles him the best of princes, and Vopiscus equals him to the most renowned commanders of antiquity^s. He was no sooner vested with the sovereignty, than he declared his eldest son Cæsar, and Prince of the Youth. The same title he soon after bestowed upon his three other sons^t.

The birth and descent of Decius.

His character.

In the very beginning of his reign he raised the most dreadful persecution that had ever oppressed the church, inflamed by his zeal for the declining cause of paganism, which he saw fatally undermined by the wonderful progress of Christianity. Concluding therefore, that the one could not be supported but by the utter ruin of the other, he enacted most cruel edicts against all who professed the Christian religion (W). This persecution, however, did not rage, with great violence, above a year, the emperor and magistrates being, by the invasion of several barbarous nations, diverted from searching after the Christians; for, about the end of the first year of Decius's reign, when he was consul for the second time with Vicius Gratus, the Scythians, that is, the Goths, having passed the Danube, under the conduct of

His cruel persecution of the church.

^q Chron. Alexand p. 632. Vict. p. 223.

^r Zos. lib. i. p. 641.

^s Aur.

^t Goltz. p. 109. Onuph. p. 261. Occo, p. 454.

(W) He vented his rage chiefly upon the bishops, of whom many were seized, inhumanly racked and executed; and, among the rest, Fabian bishop of Rome, Babylas bishop of Antioch, and Alexander bishop of Jerusalem. Great numbers of Christians fled to barren mountains, rocks, and deserts, choosing rather to live

amongst wild beasts, than men who had divested themselves of reason and humanity. Among these was the celebrated hermit Paul, who, withdrawing into the deserts of Egypt, led a solitary life for the space of ninety years at least, and became the father and founder of the order of Anchorites (4).

(4) Hier. Vit. Paul. p. 237. Euseb. lib. iii. cap. 39. Læst. Persec. cap. 4.

their

their king Cniva, invested the city of Eusterium in Lower Mœsia; but meeting with a vigorous opposition from Gal-lus, who was afterwards emperor, they raised the siege, and attacked Nicopolis, another city in the same province.

Young De-cius gains great ad-vantages over the Goths;

Decius dispatched his eldest son against the Barbarians, at the head of a numerous and well-disciplined army; who falling upon them unexpectedly, cut thirty thousand of them in pieces, and obliged the rest to retire beyond Mount Hæmus, which parted Mœsia from Thrace: however, they soon recruited their army, and, entering Thrace, laid siege to Philippopolis on the Hebrus. Young Decius hastened to the relief of the place; but while his troops were refreshing themselves, after a long march, in the neighbourhood of Berœa, a city of the same province, Cniva, coming sud-denly upon them, destroyed the whole army, and obliged the young prince to save himself by flight into Mœsia. Cniva then returned before Philippopolis; and, having made himself master of the place, massacred the inhabitants to the number of one hundred thousand^a, without distinction of sex or age^v, ravaged Thrace, and laid waste great part of Macedon, where L. Priscus, probably brother to the late emperor, commanded at that time; but he, instead of op-posing, joined the enemy, and caused himself to be pro-claimed emperor. Decius, who had remained at Rome to consecrate the walls of the city, which he had ordered to be built, or rather repaired, immediately set out for Pan-ponia; where, in the beginning of the following year, he took upon him his third consulship, and honoured with that dignity his eldest son, styled, in the inscriptions of this year, Q. Herennius Decius Cæsar^z. Decius overcame the Goths, says Zosimus, in several engagements, obliged them to relinquish the booty they had taken, and drove them out of the Roman dominions. Priscus was declared by the se-nate a public enemy, and slain; but where, or in what manner, history does not inform us.

but his ar-my is in the end entirely cut off.

The Goths are over-come by the emperor.

The office of censor re-es-ta-blished.

Valerian chosen cen-sor.

From Thrace the emperor wrote to the senate, acquaint-ing them, that he designed to re-establish the office of cen-sor, leaving to them the choice of a person fit for the dis-charge of so great a trust. The senate, upon the receipt of the emperor's letter, assembled in the temple of Castor and Pollux; and there, instead of waiting till their votes were asked, cried out with one voice, as soon as the letter was read, "Let Valerian be censor; let him censure and cor-rect the faults of others who has no faults of his own." Of Valerian, who was raised to the empire two years after,

^a Ammian. lib. xxxi. p. 446.
^v Zos. lib. i. p. 644. Jor-
 naud. de Reb. Goth. cap. 18. p. 637.

^z Spanh. p. 234.

we shall speak in a more proper place. He was then in Thrace with Decius; who, upon his receiving the decree of the senate, caused it to be publicly read; exhorted Valerian not to decline an office, to which he had been called by the republic with such extraordinary marks of esteem and distinction. Valerian earnestly intreated the emperor not to lay a burden upon him, to which he was in every respect unequal; but does not tell us whether he was in the end prevailed upon to undertake the office.

Soon after, the emperor marched against the Goths, overcame them, and reduced them to such difficulties, that they offered to release all the prisoners they had taken, and relinquish their booty, provided he would suffer them to retire unmolested: but Decius resolved to exterminate the whole nation, and deliver Rome from so troublesome an enemy, sent Trebonianus Gallus, with a strong detachment, to cut off their retreat; and, pursuing them close with the rest of the army, came up with them before they reached the Danube, and engaged them a second time. The Goths, knowing that all lay at stake, fought like men in despair. Young Decius signalized himself on this occasion, and is said to have killed many of the enemy with his own hand; but being mortally wounded with an arrow, he fell from his horse in the sight of the whole army. The emperor, seeing him fall, cried out to his soldiers, without betraying the least concern, "We have lost but one man; fellow-soldiers, let not so small a loss discourage you." Having uttered these words, he rushed into the midst of the enemy; but, instead of revenging the death of his son, was himself surrounded on all sides, overpowered, and slain.

Decius gains new advantages over the Goths.

Young Decius is killed,

and likewise the emperor.

The Goths, after the death of Decius, pursued their victory, and made a dreadful havock of the disheartened army. Such of the Romans as escaped the general slaughter, fled to the legions commanded by Gallus; who, by pretending a great concern for the unfortunate end of Decius, and the defeat of his army, and feigning to march against the Barbarians, gained the hearts of the soldiery, who, with loud acclamations, proclaimed him emperor. He immediately declared his son Volusianus Cæsar; married him to Herennia Etruscilla, the daughter of the deceased prince; and, to remove all suspicion of his being accessory to the misfortunes which had befallen him and his army, he adopted Hostilianus, the only surviving son of Decius; conferred upon him the title of Augustus; vested him with the tri-

The Roman army cut in pieces.

*Yr. of Fl. 259.
A. D. 251.
U. C. 999.*

Gallus proclaimed emperor.

He concludes a dishonourable peace with the Goths.

He persecutes the Christians.

buntial power; and appointed him consul for the ensuing year². Caius Vibius Trebonianus Gallus was a native of the island of Meninx, on the coast of Africa, called afterwards Garba, and at present Gerbi and Zarbi. Of his family no mention is made by the writers who have reached us; and all we know of his employments is, that he commanded the troops on the frontiers of Mesia in 250, and in the present year 251. He was, according to the chronicle of Alexandria, fifty-seven, but, according to Victor the younger, only forty-five, when raised to the empire. Hostilia Severa, honoured on some medals with the title of Augusta, is supposed to have been his wife. His son is styled in some inscriptions C. Vibius Volusianus, and, in others, Annius Gallus Trebonianus. His election was no sooner confirmed by the senate, than, instead of revenging the death of Decius, and the overthrow of his army, he concluded a dishonourable peace with the Goths; suffered them to retire unmolested with all their booty and prisoners, among whom were many Romans of great distinction; and even engaged to pay them yearly a considerable sum, provided they continued quiet in their own country³. After having concluded this ignominious peace, he returned to Rome; and, in the beginning of the following year, entered upon his first consulship, taking his son for his colleague. He began his reign with reviving all the edicts which had been published by his predecessor against the Christians, and caused them to be put in execution with the utmost rigour. At the same time a dreadful plague breaking out in Ethiopia, on the confines of Egypt, spread over all the provinces of the empire, and swept away incredible numbers of people, especially at Rome, where it raged with great violence (X). The same year was remarkable for a general drought, a great famine, and was kindled in most parts of the empire. M. Aufidius Perperna Licinianus assumed the title of Augustus; but this revolt was soon suppressed⁴; in what manner, we are entirely

² Zof. lib. i. p. 644. Golitz. p. 211. Zonar. p. 644. ³ Jornand. de Reb. Goth. cap. 19. p. 638. Zof. p. 644. ⁴ Vict. Epit. Occo. p. 454.

(X) Some authors write, that it carried off, among the rest, Hostilianus, the son of Decius, soon after he had been honoured with the title of Augustus (1);

but Zosimus assures us, that Gallus caused him to be put to death, and then gave out that he died of the plague (2).

(1) Vict. Epit.

(2) Zof. p. 644.

ignorant.

ignorant. The Goths, the Borani, the Carpi, the Burgundi, or Burgundiones, a people dwelling on the banks of the Danube, broke into Mœsia and Pannonia; the Scythians over-ran Asia, and the Persians, entering Syria, ravaged that province, and even made themselves masters of Antioch^c. Æmilianus, who commanded in Mœsia, overcame the Barbarians in a pitched battle, and obliged them to quit the Roman dominions.

Elated with this success, and despising Gallus, who wallowed in pleasures at Rome, while his generals were exposing their lives in defence of the empire, he caused himself to be proclaimed emperor, and was saluted by the troops under his command, whose affections he had gained, with the titles of Augustus and Father of his Country. This revolt roused Gallus from his lethargy, who immediately ordered Valerian to march with the Gaulish and German legions against this new rival. But Æmilianus, without giving him time to assemble his troops, advanced towards Italy, and, by long marches, arrived in a short time at Interamna, now Terni, about thirty-two miles from Rome. There he was met by Gallus, and his son, at the head of a considerable army; but the troops of the latter, despising their leaders, slew them in the sight of Æmilianus, and proclaimed him emperor. Such was the end of the emperor Gallus, after he had reigned a year and six months^d. No sooner was intelligence of their death brought to Rome, than the senate confirmed the election of the soldiery, and honoured the new prince with the usual titles. Æmilianus, as Aurelius Victor calls him, or C. Julius Æmilianus, as he is styled on the ancient coins, was a Moor, of a very mean descent. He had served from his youth in the Roman armies, and raised himself to the first employments in the state; for he had been consul before he attained the empire^e. In the letter which he wrote to the senate after the death of Gallus, he promised to drive the Goths out of Thrace, and the Persians out of Mesopotamia and Armenia, to comport himself in every thing as the lieutenant of the republic, and to leave the exercise of the sovereign power to the senate^f (Y). The troops, which Valerian

Æmilianus proclaimed emperor in Mœsia.

Gallus is killed by his own men.

Æmilianus proclaimed emperor at Rome.

^c Zof. p. 644. Zonar. p. 232. p. 364. ^f Zonar. p. 233.

^d Syncel. p. 376.

^e Birag.

(X) Aurelius Victor writes, that he governed with great moderation; wherein he disagrees with Zonaras, who tells us, that he

lerian was leading to the assistance of Gallus, hearing in Rhætia that he was dead, refused to submit to the new prince, and proclaimed their own general emperor; who, thereupon, quickening his march, passed the mountains, and entered Italy at the head of a very numerous and well-disciplined body of troops.

Yr. of Fl.
3601.
A. D. 253.
U. C. 1001.

*He is killed
by his own
men, and
Valerian
proclaimed
emperor in
his room.*

Æmilianus's army no sooner understood that Valerian, of whom they entertained a high opinion, had been proclaimed emperor by the troops under his command, than they fell upon their own leader, and dispatched him, to avoid, says Zonaras, a civil war, and the shedding of the blood of their fellow-citizens. Æmilianus was killed at Spoletum, now Spoleti, or at a bridge in that neighbourhood; which Victor the younger pretends to have been thence called the Bloody Bridge. He died in the forty-sixth year of his age, after a short reign of three, or, at most, of four months^g (Y).

^g Hier. Chron. Eutrop. Aur. Vict.

he acted more like a soldier than a prince, and did many things highly unbecoming an emperor (1).

(Y) Eusebius does not even rank him among the emperors (2); and is therein followed by the chronicle of Alexandria, and that of Nicephorus, in which Valerian is placed immediately after Gallus. According to Aurelius Victor, Æmilianus died a natural death (3). In his reign C. Virius Paulinus was governor of Rome, and comes domesticorum (4). This is the first time we find the latter employment, which, in the fourth century, became very famous, mentioned in history. Pancirollus takes the words domestici and protectores to be synonymous terms. The province of the latter was to guard the prince's person,

and, under the Christian emperors, to carry the great standard with the cross. They were superior in rank to the prætorian guards, and distinguished with particular badges peculiar to them. This corps consisted of three thousand five hundred men before Justinian's time, who is said to have increased them to the number of five thousand five hundred. They were divided into several bands of horse and foot, called scholæ, and commanded by some person of great distinction, styled comes domesticorum (5). From several inscriptions of this time, we learn, that the word comes was already a title of dignity; so that the title of comes, or count, does not, as some imagine, owe its original entirely to Constantine.

(1) Zonar. p. 235. (2) Euseb. lib. vii. cap. 10. p. 255. (3) Aur. Vict. in Æmil. (4) Onuph. in Fast. p. 262. (5) Pancir. in Not. Imp. Rom. cap. 89.

Æmilianus

Æmilianus being killed, the senate, with great demonstrations of joy, confirmed the election of Valerian, and conferred upon his son Gallienus the title of Cæsar. Valerian was descended from one of the most illustrious families in Rome, had commanded armies, and discharged, with great reputation, the chief employments of the empire, both civil and military. He was adored by persons of all ranks, for his integrity, prudence, modesty, and extraordinary accomplishments. He was well versed in all the branches of learning, and had ever lived free from the vices which generally prevailed in those dissolute times. Thus he was universally judged worthy of the empire before he attained it; but was afterwards found unequal to such a weighty charge; whence most writers ascribe to his want of activity, prudence, and resolution, the many calamities which befel the empire in his and his son's reign^b. Before his accession to the empire, he was prince of the senate, a rank which gave him a right to vote before all the consulars. Afterwards he commanded the third legion, and was, by degrees, raised to the first posts in the army. He attended Decius in his wars with the Goths, and was, while he continued with him in Thrace, named by the senate to the censorship, in the manner we have related above (Z). He began his reign with great applause, and conducted himself so as to gain the affections both of the senate and people, paying the utmost respect to the former, and easing the other of the heavy taxes, with which they had been loaded by his predecessors. He enacted many excellent laws, and suppressed most of the disorders, which,

His descent, employments, and character.

^b Eutrop. Zof. lib. i. p. 640.

(Z) In the ancient inscriptions he is styled P. Licinius Valerianus; to these names Victor the younger adds that of Colobius; and Onuphrius quotes an inscription, in which he is named P. Aurelius Licinius Valerius Valerianus (1). He married two wives, and had by the first, whose name is not mentioned in history, Gallienus, who succeeded him in the em-

pire. By his second wife, named by some writers Mariniana (2), he had Valerian, who was twice consul, to wit, in 258 and 263, and honoured, either by his father, or by his brother Gallienus, with the title of Cæsar (3). He had other sons; for Gallienus is said to have married his brother's sons, and to have styled himself The Brother of many Princes (4).

{1} Onuph. in Fast. p. 262. Vit. p. 175. Goltz, p. 114.

{2} Birag. p. 367. {4} Idem ibid.

{3} Val.

in those unhappy times, prevailed, not only at Rome, but throughout the empire. He employed only men of merit; and most of those whom he preferred to the command of his armies, were afterwards raised to the empire¹. In the beginning of the following year 254, he entered upon his second consulship, with his son Gallienus. Zosimus writes, that at the commencement of his reign, he took Gallienus for his partner in the empire, being induced to this action by the danger to which the empire, invaded on all sides by the Barbarians, was then exposed²; for the Germans and the Franks committed great devastations in that part of Gaul which bordered on the Rhine; the Goths and the Carpi invaded the provinces of Mœsia, Thrace, and Macedonia; and the Persians, passing the Euphrates, over-ran Syria, Cilicia, and Cappadocia. Aurelian, at that time tribune of a legion quartered in Mentz, fell upon the Franks while they were ravaging the neighbouring country, killed a great number, took many prisoners, whom he sold for slaves, and obliged the rest to quit their booty, and retire (A).

The empire invaded on all sides by the Barbarians.

The Germans defeated by Gallienus.

Valerian being consul the third time, and Gallienus the second, a great victory was gained in Germany by the latter, who thereupon assumed the title of Germanicus Maximus, as appears from several medals of this year³; but what nation he overcame, whether the Franks, or the Alemanni,

¹ Aur. Vit. p. 217. Trebel. Pollio. Hist. Trigint. Tyrann. cap. 9. p. 189. Prob. Vit. p. 234. ² Zos. lib. i. p. 646. ³ Birag. p. 367, & 371.

(A) The country of the Franks, now for the first time mentioned in history, was bounded on the north by the ocean; on the west by the ocean and the river Rhone; and on the south by the Weser: according to which description, they possessed the modern countries of Westphalia, Hesse, and some adjacent states (1). They were a motly multitude, consisting of various German nations dwelling beyond the Rhine; who, uniting in defence of their

common liberty, took thence the name of Franks, the word *frank* signifying in their language, as it still does in ours, *free* (2). Among them we find the following nations mentioned, the Actuarii, Chamavi, Bructeri, Salii, Frisii, Chauci, Amfivarii, and Catti (3). The Franks are sometimes called Sicambri, because they inhabited the country formerly possessed by that nation, which was entirely cut off by Augustus.

(1) Adrian. Valef. Rer. Francicar. Buch. p. 209. *ibid.*

(2) Buch. (3) Adrian. Valef. Not. Gall. p. 201, & Buch. p. 210.

who inhabited the countries lying between the Rhine, the Maine, and the Danube, history does not declare. The next consuls were Maximus and Glabrio, during whose administration Gallienus, with a body of ten thousand men, defeated, if Zonaras is to be credited, three hundred thousand Alemanni in the neighbourhood of Milan; vanquished the Heruli, a Gothic nation; and with great success made war upon the Franks^m. We wish that writer had given us a more distinct account of these heroic exploits. In Gaul, Posthumius, a commander of great prowess and experience, gained great advantages over several German nations, who had invaded that provinceⁿ. Valerian being consul the fourth time, and Gallienus the third, a violent persecution was raised against the Christians; Macrianus, a celebrated magician of Egypt, having seduced the emperor, who had been hitherto a great patron of the Christian religion, by persuading him, that the affairs of the empire would never prosper till the Pagan rites were restored, and the religion of the Christians, so odious to the gods, utterly abolished. This persecution, commonly reckoned the eighth, lasted three years; that is, from the present year 257 to the year 260, when Valerian was taken prisoner by the Persians.

The Christians persecuted.

Aurelian having succeeded Ulpian Crinitus in the command of the troops in Illyricum and Thrace, drove the Goths out of those provinces, took an incredible number of prisoners, and, pursuing them beyond the Danube, laid waste their country, and returned to Mœsia loaded with booty^o. At the same time Probus, passing the Danube, defeated the Sarmatians and Quadi. About the latter end of this year the emperor, leaving Rome, set out for the East, to oppose the Persians, who had invaded Mesopotamia and Syria, and committed dreadful ravages. He reached Byzantium in the beginning of the following year, when Memmius Tuscus and Bassus were consuls; and held a council, at which all the chief officers of the empire assisted, to deliberate about the measures to be taken; for Sapor, king of Persia, had already seized all Armenia, made himself master of Nisibis and Carrhæ in Mesopotamia, and, advancing into Syria at the head of a powerful army, had ravaged that province, and taken Antioch. His guide in this expedition was Cyriades, descended of an illustrious family, but abandoned from his youth to all manner of wickedness; insomuch, that not able to bear the reproaches and wholesome admonitions of his father, he fled

The Goths defeated by Aurelian, and the Sarmatians by Probus.

The Persians overrun several provinces.

^m Zonar. Vit. Gallien. p. 235.
ⁿ Tyrann. p. 184.

^o Trebel. Poll. in Vit. Trigint.
^p Aurel. Vit. p. 213.

from

from home, and retired into Persia, carrying thither a great quantity of gold and silver which he had purloined. There he entered into the service of the Persian king, instigated him to make war upon the Romans, and served him as a guide, being well acquainted with the countries, in his marches through Mesopotamia, Armenia, and Syria. Sapor, after he had taken and plundered Antioch, returned into Persia, to discharge his army of the immense booty with which they were encumbered; and left Cyriades governor of the conquered countries, who now assumed the title of Cæsar, and soon after that of Augustus, and was acknowledged emperor by most of the eastern provinces^p.

The Scythians commit great devastations in Asia.

At the same time the Borani, a Scythian nation, crossing the Euxine Sea, surprised and plundered the cities of Pytus in Bosporus, and Trapezus in Pontus; then, advancing to the neighbourhood of Byzantium, they crossed over into Asia, and surprised the cities of Chalcedon, Nicæa, Apamæa, Prusa, and several other places, which they plundered; and then returned, loaded with riches, into their own country^q. Next year, when Secularis and Bassus were consuls, Valerian marched from Cappadocia, whither he had pursued the Scythians, into Syria, recovered Antioch, and advanced into Mesopotamia, where he met Sapor, attacked him, but, by the treachery of Macrianus, who persuaded him to engage in a disadvantageous post, lost the flower of his troops in the action, and was himself taken prisoner^r.

Yr. of Fl.
2608.
A. D. 260.
U. C. 1008.

Valerian defeated by the Persians and taken prisoner.

Thus Zonarus, Aurelius Victor, Eutropius, and Agathias; but Zozimus relates, that Valerian having, after the battle in which he was defeated, been prevailed upon to confer in person with Sapor, was seized by that treacherous prince. Be that as it may, all authors agree, that he was taken prisoner, carried in triumph by Sapor into Persia, and insulted in a most disgraceful manner by that haughty conqueror; who, after having shewn him loaded with chains in all the chief cities of his empire, treated him with great indignities, making him his footstool whenever he mounted on horseback^s. He was taken in the year 260, the seventieth year of his age, and sixth of his reign, being alive in the year 263; and the chronicle of Alexandria tells us, that he did not die till the year 269. After his death his body was flayed by Sapor's orders, preserved in salt, and his skin

^p Vit. Trigint. Tyran. p. 185. ^q Zof. lib. i. p. 648. ^r Zon. p. 234. Vict. Epit. Eutrop. Fest. Agath. lib. iv. p. 153.
^s Euseb. Orat. Const. cap. 24. Laët. Persecut. cap. 5. Oros. lib. vii. cap. 22. Vit. Valer. p. 175.

dressed,

dress'd, dyed red, and expos'd in a temple ; where, to the eternal ignominy of the Roman name, it was exhibited to all foreign princes and ambassadors, as a lasting monument of the power of the Persian monarch (M).

(M) We are told, that nothing grieved the unhappy Valerian, in his deplorable condition, so much as to see himself entirely neglected by his son Gallienus, who was so far from urging the Persian king to set him at liberty, or offering to ransom him, that, on the contrary, he express'd uncommon joy when news were brought him of his captivity: though most foreign princes, and even those who had assist- ed Sapor in his wars against the Romans, did all that lay in their power to prevail upon him to grant the Roman emperor his liberty ; but the haughty Persian was too much elated with his success to be terrified with the menaces of his enemies, or to hearken to the intreaties of his friends.

END OF THE THIRTEENTH VOLUME.





